UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-SEVENTH SESSION

Official Records

SECOND COMMITTEE
11th meeting
held on
Friday, 9 October 1992
at 3 p.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 11th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. PIRIZ-BALLON (Uruguay)

later: Miss DIOP (Senegal)
(Vice-Chairman)

CONTENTS

AGENDA ITEM 78: DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION (continued)

(c) NEW AND RENEWABLE SOURCES OF ENERGY

(d) DEVELOPMENT OF THE ENERGY RESOURCES OF DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

(e) INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION TO MITIGATE THE ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES ON KUWAIT AND OTHER COUNTRIES IN THE REGION RESULTING FROM THE SITUATION BETWEEN IRAQ AND KUWAIT

This record is subject to correction.
Corrections should be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned *within one week of the date of publication* to the Chief of the Official Records Editing Section, Room DC2-750, 2 United Nations Plaza, and incorporated in a copy of the record.

Corrections will be issued after the end of the session, in a separate corrigendum for each Committee.

92-56936 6022S (E)

Distr. GENERAL
A/C.2/47/SR.11
15 October 1992

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

/...

The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 78: DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION (continued)

(c) NEW AND RENEWABLE SOURCES OF ENERGY

(d) DEVELOPMENT OF THE ENERGY RESOURCES OF DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

(e) INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION TO MITIGATE THE ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES ON KUWAIT AND OTHER COUNTRIES IN THE REGION RESULTING FROM THE SITUATION BETWEEN IRAQ AND KUWAIT

1. Ms. FREUDENSCHUSS-REICHL (Austria) said that although the problem of global warming could not be addressed without examining patterns of energy production and consumption, the documents of the United Nations Conference were not as explicit as might be wished. While it was necessary to provide sufficient energy for sustainable development, current trends could not continue without grave consequences for the environment and global climate. Little had been done since the adoption of the Nairobi Programme of Action for the Development and Utilization of New and Renewable Sources of Energy; unfortunately energy only became a focus of attention when oil prices rose or conflicts erupted. She welcomed the proposal of the United Nations Solar Energy Group for Environment and Development to establish a new international solar energy agency with sufficient political and financial resources, as she welcomed the establishment of the Committee on New and Renewable Sources of Energy and on Energy for Development and recalled that Austria was playing an active role in the ongoing negotiations on a European energy charter.

2. Mr. SETH (India) said that full account must be taken of the fact that the overriding priorities of developing countries were economic and social development and poverty eradication, and that those countries' energy consumption would need to grow in consequence. The role of the United Nations in promoting the development of energy resources thus remained as important as ever. Furthermore, the tasks before the newly created Committee on New and Renewable Sources of Energy and on Energy for Development were promotional in nature and could not be dovetailed into the functions of the Commission on Sustainable Development, whose function would be one of monitoring and review.

3. India had laid great emphasis on the development of nonconventional energy sources. Wind electric generators had been installed and the process of wind mapping had reached an advanced stage. Great emphasis was placed on the utilization of solar energy, both from solar thermal routes and from solar photovoltaics. India had undertaken local research and development in amorphous silicon technology, and hoped to use the results extensively after field trials. Solar thermal energy had been used chiefly to heat water by solar plate collectors, in industrial and domestic applications.

(Mr. Seth, India)

4. Many of its programmes were being carried out in the framework of bilateral and multilateral cooperation. India was keen to share its experience with other countries interested in maximizing the feasibility of nonconventional energy sources. In the context of South-South cooperation, his delegation drew special attention to a project for solar energy applications that was being coordinated by India. His delegation would be ready to share the fruits of India's efforts with other countries, both developing and developed.

5. His delegation had highlighted some of the areas relating to new and renewable sources of energy in which it expected the Committee on New and Renewable Sources of Energy and on Energy for Development to set agendas, goals and timetables. It was especially important that the Committee promote the transfer of technology on concessional and preferential terms, as well as adequate financial and other incentives to help the spread of new and renewable sources of energy world wide.

6. Since his delegation had spoken on the subject of development of energy resources of developing countries at the most recent session of the Economic and Social Council, it would simply express once again its concern that instability of supply and prices of energy played havoc with the economies of oil-importing developing countries. The oil shocks and the uncertainty during the Gulf crisis had had a severe impact on many developing countries. In that regard, his delegation agreed with the conclusions of the Secretary-General's report (A/47/202), that it was important to avoid a false sense of energy supply security; that comprehensive measures should be taken to accelerate energy exploration and development in the developing countries; that very few of the objectives repeatedly endorsed by the General Assembly over the past 10 years had been achieved; and that the Assembly should consider the preparation of an expanded programme of action in that regard. The meeting of energy experts the following year must focus attention on that crucial area.

7. Mr. ARRIA (Venezuela) said that whereas in the past, people had assumed that nature was invulnerable and resources inexhaustible, they now realized that that was not the case. A global approach to the environment was thus indispensable. It was not enough, however, simply to assess the overall nature of the problem: the lifestyles of both rich and poor had a significant impact on the ecological system as a whole. The poor caused damage to the environment because of their lack of resources, whereas the rich polluted it with their excesses. All efforts to overcome environmental problems would be unavailing unless they were directed towards achieving a sustainable level of development.

8. Sadly, there had been no real commitment to the transfer of sufficient resources and clean technologies from the developed to the developing world. Yet, in a world in which all were interdependent, to refuse to transfer the resources and technologies vital to sustainable development would be tantamount to betraying mankind's common humanity. The question was, how long

(Mr. Arria, Venezuela)

it would be before that fact was acknowledged; for delay would prove extremely costly.

9. Awareness of the pollution caused by hydrocarbons, together with the impact of prices, had initially stimulated research into new, renewable and clean sources of energy. Ironically, that heightened awareness had led to a fall in petroleum prices, which in turn had reduced the incentive to conduct research into renewable sources of energy. It was thus clear that low petroleum prices did not contribute to fostering research into new and renewable sources of energy. To blame the situation solely on petroleum and its derivatives was like blaming gold for greed, inflation and injustice. The real root of the problem was the use to which fossil fuels and hydrocarbons were put and, especially, the development of destructive lifestyles and patterns of consumption. The world community was still paying for the consequences of irresponsible use of those resources. A fundamental change was needed in the relationship between human beings and the planetary ecological system. The technological revolution and population growth had led to an unsustainable pattern of development. The dominant economic actors and the free market must be brought to an understanding of that problem, and it must be acknowledged that the market economy actively encouraged non-sustainable patterns of development that ultimately militated against the well-being of society. The petroleum-producing countries must involve themselves more in research into new and renewable sources of energy.

10. Mr. AMIN-MANSOUR (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that the Persian Gulf conflict had had considerable adverse environmental and economic consequences on the countries of the region. Although the Secretary-General's report (A/47/265) was very useful it fell far short of a comprehensive approach to the damages suffered by all the countries of the region notwithstanding the mandate given under General Assembly resolution 46/216. He invited all States, international and non-governmental organizations to cooperate with the nations of the Persian Gulf region to study and mitigate the environmental deterioration of the region and called for the strengthening of the capacities of the Regional Organization for the Protection of the Marine Environment (ROPME) and for more international financial support for environmental rehabilitation programmes.

11. Turning to the report of the Secretary-General (A/47/202), he noted that consumption of commercial energy in developing countries was expected to continue to increase rapidly for some time. Unfortunately, however, for a number of reasons investment in energy sectors had been reduced. In order to meet the increasing energy needs of the developing countries, serious consideration needed to be given to the development of energy resources particularly in developing countries. In that context, there was a great need for concerted and close cooperation among consumers and producers of energy in order to guarantee an uninterrupted supply of energy world wide. It would also be a good idea to examine ways and means of promoting exploration for and use of natural gas. In that connection the United Nations system could greatly contribute to energy supply security through the provision of technical assistance to the developing countries.

(Mr. Amin-Mansour, Islamic Republic of Iran)

12. As the general contribution of new and renewable sources of energy had remained stable at about 14 per cent of total world energy supply, his delegation believed that the recommendations of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on New and Renewable Sources of Energy in 1991 provided the modalities to intensify national, multilateral and international activities in that field and could accelerate the implementation of the Nairobi Programme of Action. Finally, although its restructuring was not the only way to solve existing problems, his delegation welcomed the establishment of the Committee on New and Renewable Sources of Energy and on Energy for Development and expressed the hope that the initiative would provide the necessary momentum to international cooperation in the development and utilization of such resources.

13. Miss Diop (Senegal), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

14. Mr. AL-SABAH (Kuwait) commended the report contained in document A/47/265. The forces of the Iraqi regime had purposefully leaked 6-8 million barrels of oil into the Gulf, torched oil wells and laid mines throughout Kuwait in the greatest ecological crime of the age. The pollution had affected the air, sea and land equally. Lakes of oil covered large areas of the desert, obliterating plant life and posing a threat to human health. Hundreds of Kuwaiti civilians had lost their lives through explosions of mines or ammunition left by the Iraqi regime. Marine life would be affected for decades by the oil spill. The ecological disaster had had grave social and economic consequences, including loss of jobs, particularly in fishing and agriculture. Detailed studies needed to be made of the ecological impact of the disaster and a strategy drawn up to rehabilitate the environment of the region.

15. Since it was beyond the capacity of the region to provide the necessary response, he appealed for increased international cooperation and the formulation of a strategy by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to mitigate the environmental consequences and to alleviate the social and economic problems arising from the disaster. Finally, he agreed with the Secretary-General that there was a need to develop an effective international mechanism to guide and coordinate the response to future large-scale ecological crises.

16. Mr. ISAKOV (Russian Federation) welcomed the recent increase in the use of new and renewable sources of energy, and the introduction of relevant technologies in many developing countries. The share of new and renewable sources of energy in the national energy balances of some developing countries had now reached 60-70 per cent, with an overall indicator of 14 per cent.

17. Prevailing patterns of energy use in the world had led to a massive deterioration of the environment. It was thus of crucial importance to give priority to environmental safety in economic growth, a task which called for diversification of energy sources through the use of clean new and renewable sources of energy. It was clearly necessary to do everything possible to

(Mr. Isakov, Russian Federation)

stimulate the transfer of technology and a flow of direct foreign investment; and his delegation fully supported calls for free and non-discriminatory exchange of advanced technology in that sphere. The United Nations project to establish networks of centres of the latest international experience in the sphere of new and renewable energy sources was extremely important in that regard. The Russian Federation was willing to involve in that network one or two national scientific centres dealing with the uses of solar energy.

18. The report of the Committee on the Development and Utilization of New and Renewable Sources of Energy (A/47/36) offered a realistic appraisal of the implementation of the Nairobi Programme of Action. Overall, the results left a great deal to be desired, especially with regard to promotion of transfer and adaptation of technology for non-conventional energy sources. One of the major obstacles to broad introduction of technology was the lack of material resources and the absence of a proper scientific and technical basis. There was undoubtedly a great deal of potential in systematic conversion of military production, both in the developed and in the developing countries. Enhanced South-South cooperation also offered encouraging prospects. The newly established Committee on New and Renewable Sources of Energy and on Energy for Development must give priority to the study of ways and means of using conversion processes to enhance the transfer of relevant technologies, and take account of the interests of various groups of countries, including those whose economies were undergoing transition, making full use of their accumulated experience.

19. With regard to the proposal to establish an international agency on the use of renewable energy resources, his delegation considered that the establishment of such an agency must not result in any duplication of effort on the part of the various agencies and bodies of the United Nations system, or in any increase in budgetary expenditure. The necessary resources should be mobilized on a voluntary basis.

20. His delegation welcomed the joint memorandum concerning a new global energy policy interrelationship, issued following the Ministerial Workshop on Energy sponsored by the Governments of Egypt, Italy and Norway (A/37/390), adding that it would be prepared to consider the participation of representatives of the Russian Federation in the next meeting of that type.

21. His delegation also welcomed the report of the Secretary-General on energy exploration and development trends in developing countries (A/47/202), and agreed that continued development would lead to a further increase in energy use requiring significant resources with which to create additional energy sources. To meet that challenge, developing countries would need first to mobilize their own internal resources on the basis of effective macro- and micro-economic policy and efficient market mechanisms. Those efforts must, however, be accompanied by external support. In that regard, it would be appropriate to step up work on preparation of an expanded programme of action for the exploration and development of energy resources in developing

(Mr. Isakov, Russian Federation)

countries, in accordance with Assembly resolution 45/209. Special attention should be given to ensuring environmental security of energy resources in the light of the final documents of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, achieving an optimum balance between traditional and new sources of energy, and increasing use of energy from small rivers and other environmentally friendly energy sources. The Secretariat might consider producing a special report summarizing world experience in macro- and micro-energy use. Increased attention to the environmental aspects of energy resources, particularly new and renewable sources of energy, could do much to help increase the flow of outside investment to the economies of the developing countries.

22. Mr. SHAKIR (Iraq) said that as a result of the aggression carried out under the cover of international legality, Iraq had suffered tremendous ecological damage, which had had grave consequences for human life, health and welfare. Electric power stations had been destroyed, making it impossible to provide drinking water or to treat industrial water, thus polluting rivers and groundwater and creating new polluted marshlands in many areas. According to a report by the British Atomic Energy Authority, the coalition forces had used missiles of depleted uranium containing chemical toxins and radioactive substances which would threaten the population and the environment for generations to come.

23. The report contained in document A/47/265, about which he otherwise had reservations, stated that military activities had devastated large areas of the land and adversely affected the agricultural production and livestock of Iraq. Iraq had suffered from black and acid rains arising from the burning of oil installations; the consequent air and soil pollution had affected crops. Water had been polluted with chemical and organic substances from industrial plants which had been bombed and destroyed. The marine environment of Iraqi territorial waters had suffered grave damage from the bombing of Iraqi oil tankers. Many land animals and birds had been killed or forced to migrate by the bombing and the spread of toxic substances in the environment. The area of greenery had been reduced and desertification threatened since the public had been forced to cut down trees for firewood in the absence of fuel and cooking gas during the aggression. As a result of the economic blockade, a number of projects to combat desertification, reclaim desert lands or monitor water quality had had to be stopped.

24. As the embargo prevented Iraq from using its economic resources to protect its environment or to import medicines, vaccines and other health supplies the health situation continued to deteriorate. Food was short, diseases were spreading and mortality rates were up. In view of Iraq's continuing compliance with the obligations imposed upon it there was no longer any objective justification for the embargo, and he therefore requested that it be lifted.

25. Mr. NOURUZOV (Azerbaijan) said that from the mid-nineteenth century Azerbaijan had pioneered the extraction and processing of petroleum, and by the turn of the century had been producing 53 per cent of the world's hydrocarbon resources; it had thus been one of the first centres of transnational corporations and a major industrial centre of Europe. The overthrow of the 1918-1920 Democratic Republic of Azerbaijan, the first in the Orient, and Azerbaijan's subsequent inclusion in the Soviet Union had meant a complete break with the initial development model of the energy sector. The rapacious exploitation of Azerbaijan's oil resources for over seven decades had had disastrous ecological consequences, and the use of outmoded techniques had impaired extraction potential.

26. Azerbaijan's newly-won independence would allow a complete economic reform and the overhaul of the energy sector. That, however, would only be possible with the help of the major transnational oil corporations, international financial institutions, the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and regional and interregional economic blocs. It was vital to draw up a model for such cooperation, to set priorities for the development of the sector. Azerbaijan would also welcome expertise from transnational oil corporations; work was currently under way to draw up large-scale contracts with such entities, and he hoped for cooperation with the Department of Economic and Social Development (DESD), UNDP, IMF and the World Bank in that respect. Azerbaijan had a dire need for specialists in international trade law and international accounts, both on a consultancy basis and for training of national staff.

27. Azerbaijan stood on the brink of ecological catastrophe; unless emergency measures were taken at the international level, environmental degradation in the oil-producing region, in particular the Apsheron peninsula and the Caspian Sea shelf, could become irreversible. In order to avert an ecological disaster, he requested that a group of experts be dispatched to the area by UNDP and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) to report on the ecological situation there. The Government of Azerbaijan would provide all possible assistance to such a group.

28. Finally, the natural environment of Azerbaijan, in particular, the Apsheron peninsula, with its unparalleled levels of sunshine and wind, would provide an ideal setting for the study and exploitation of alternative sources of energy.

29. Mr. GOUDIMA (Ukraine) said that, in spite of the progress made in promoting the use of new energy sources, his delegation could not but agree with the conclusions contained in the report of the Committee on the Development and Utilization of New and Renewable Sources of Energy (A/47/36), to the effect that the decade since the Nairobi Conference had essentially been a decade of lost opportunity.

(Mr. Goudima, Ukraine)

30. Thus, while supporting the overall thrust of the Nairobi Programme of Action, his delegation endorsed the conclusion of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on New and Renewable Sources of Energy, regarding a possible revision of priorities in the light of changes in the energy, environmental and technology spheres over the past decade. His delegation also looked forward to effective work within the new subsidiary body, the Committee on New and Renewable Sources of Energy and on Energy for Development, the establishment of which should help enhance United Nations activity in that important area.

31. Ukraine, which had suffered seriously as a result of the Chernobyl disaster, had had to rethink the role and place of traditional energy sources in the development of its economy. It was convinced of the need for an environmentally sound energy base for the country. Thus, despite the difficulty of finding new ways of providing stable energy resources, its Parliament had frozen construction of new nuclear power stations until 1995. Ukraine was striving to promote energy efficiency and the use of new and renewable sources of energy. In view of its natural and climatic characteristics, it was currently making large-scale use of only one renewable source of energy, namely, hydropower. At the same time, potential existed for the use of biomass, geothermal, wind and especially solar energy.

32. Development of energy resources in the developing countries was one of the major tasks facing the United Nations in the sphere of its social and economic activities. His delegation supported United Nations activities carried out in implementation of the provisions of General Assembly resolutions 40/208, 43/193 and 45/209. The report of the Secretary-General on energy exploration and development trends in developing countries (A/47/202) was well thought out and of great practical interest. It was impossible not to agree with the conclusion contained therein, that a resumption of economic growth, particularly in the developing world, could lead to yet another energy crisis, which could be prevented if precautionary measures were taken by the international community. His delegation was convinced that the global economy needed such an internationally agreed regime for energy policy, designed to eliminate destabilizing fluctuations in the level of supply and prices. It must also be a just regime, with regard both to producers and to consumers, and must not limit access to reliable energy sources. Good prospects for establishing such a regime had been opened up in connection with the signing in The Hague of the European energy charter, which provided a political and legal basis for future energy cooperation in Europe, and which might also have a positive impact on energy at global level. His delegation was counting on the conclusion of work on the basic and additional protocols to that text.

33. With regard to agenda item 78 (e), his delegation supported efforts by the international community to mitigate the environmental consequences of the conflict between Iraq and Kuwait. It agreed with the conclusion contained in the report by the Secretary-General (A/47/265), on the need for an effective international mechanism to coordinate activities in response to large-scale

(Mr. Goudima, Ukraine)

environmental crises in the future. At the same time, it felt that in view of the harmful effects on the environment of the Gulf war, it was necessary to rethink some aspects of liability of States for ensuring environmental safety. Ukraine supported the idea of establishing an institute for international liability for damage to the environment, and in particular, an international environmental court; and was convinced of the need to lay down principles for environmental diplomacy, and to make full use of the potential offered by the Security Council in that regard.

34. Ms. ASHRAF (UNESCO) said that as the environment had a limited capacity to absorb the damage resulting from the production of conventional sources of energy, it was important that the significant potential which solar and other renewable energies had to offer be exploited. Accordingly, the twenty-sixth session of the General Conference of UNESCO had agreed on the holding of a second World Solar Summit at UNESCO headquarters in Paris, in July 1993. It would provide an opportunity to assess overall technological developments in solar energy over the previous two decades and assess the successes and failures in development of other renewable energies. The Summit might define the prospects and potential of renewable energies for the next decade and beyond by instituting a world decade for solar energy to intensify cooperation in the promotion and exchange of ideas and information.

35. UNESCO had been involved in strengthening international cooperation and national capacities in the field of renewable sources of energy through regional pilot projects on an energy information exchange, providing specific study and research grants, training and updating existing regional data banks. In relation to the intersectoral and inter-agency cooperation project on environmental education and information, her organization was developing specific pilot projects with a view to introducing the environmental dimension in the teaching programmes of faculties or schools. UNESCO had also organized in April 1992 its third Science and Culture Forum on the theme "Towards eco-ethics: alternative visions of culture, science, technology and nature" at Belem, Brazil. UNESCO sincerely hoped that the declaration adopted at that meeting would be a global eco-ethics involving the whole world.

36. UNESCO shared the concern of the international community at the adverse impact that the deterioration in the environment as a result of the Persian Gulf conflict had on the economic activities of Kuwait and other countries of the region. The Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) of UNESCO, in cooperation with UNEP and the Regional Organization for the Protection of the Marine Environment (ROPME) was involved in various activities such as workshops, training courses on marine data and the application of remote sensing techniques to study the marine environment. UNESCO/IOC was also participating in two oceanographic cruises in the region. The findings of the cruises and work being undertaken in individual countries of the region would be reviewed at an international scientific conference which had been planned in cooperation with ROPME, UNEP and the countries in the region for the third quarter of 1993 in Tehran.

(Ms. Ashraf, UNESCO)

37. With a view to formulating integrated approaches towards development and considering the importance of issues related to the sustainable development of the region, UNESCO was also involved in a project for assistance to Kuwaiti children and families aimed at establishing a family/community multi-purpose resource centre to provide an appropriate environment for the healthy development of Kuwaiti children. Moreover, a high-level multidisciplinary mission organized by UNESCO had visited Kuwait earlier on in the year and reviewed the situation of that country's higher education and made proposals for reinforcing programmes for higher education and scientific research institutions.

38. Mr. CISSE (Senegal) said that, although more than 10 years had elapsed since the adoption of the Nairobi Programme of Action for the Development and Utilization of New and Renewable Sources of Energy, the energy situation of non-oil producing developing countries remained virtually unchanged. According to a recent study of the African Development Bank (ADB), biomass energy remained by far the major energy resource in Africa as a whole, sometimes accounting for more than 88 per cent of the energy balance. That was the reason for the serious deterioration of the environment.

39. Despite a shortage of financial resources, the developing countries had sustained their efforts to promote new and renewable sources of energy. Senegal, for instance, was pursuing a policy to guarantee the quality of renewable biomass energy based on large-scale reforestation projects, which were being administered by rural communities, the development of replacement fuels such as butane and peat and the efficient use of wood-based fuels. Having realized very early on the importance of concerted action, Senegal had participated in the development of regional hydroelectric projects such as the Senegal River Development Organization involving three countries. As far as solar and wind power were concerned, it was pursuing strategies that focused on the need to train management personnel at all levels and in all specialities in the area of research and development as well as in establishing local production plants. In the area of solar energy, Senegal received substantial assistance from some European countries and from Japan.

40. None the less, Senegal and the other countries of Africa continued to be hampered in their efforts and believed that international cooperation in the implementation of the Nairobi Programme of Action in developing countries should be strengthened, that the transfer of technologies to developing countries should take place on preferential and concessional terms and that UNDP, in the context of efforts to mobilize sufficient financial resources, should revitalize the Energy Account.

41. The United Nations system as a whole ought to play a key role in strengthening national institutions in developing countries in the area of data dissemination and in the setting up of energy databases. Senegal welcomed the establishment of the Committee on New and Renewable Sources of Energy and on Energy for Development which would help to ensure vital

(Mr. Cisse, Senegal)

coordination among the activities carried out in that area by the agencies of the United Nations system and other institutions in order to put the Nairobi Programme of Action into effect in a rational and harmonious manner.

42. Mr. JIN Tongchao (China) said that his delegation strongly hoped that there would be a clear-cut division of responsibilities between the Commission on Sustainable Development, which was to be established during the current session of the General Assembly, and the Committee on New and Renewable Sources of Energy and on Energy for Development and that the mandates of the two bodies would complement one another. The idea of merging the two bodies was premature, as the Committee on New and Renewable Sources of Energy and on Energy for Development had yet to demonstrate what it could do.

43. Programmes involving new and renewable sources of energy figured prominently in China's national development plan. Over the past 10 years or so, some US$ 5 billion had been invested in the development of such sources of energy resulting in the establishment of a cluster of new and renewable sources of energy-oriented industries as well as national and local centres devoted to research and development in that field. In carrying out its research and development activities in that area, China had always attached great importance to cooperation with the United Nations and its specialized agencies and other developed as well as developing countries as such cooperation benefited all the sides involved. An example of such cooperation was the hosting by China, in cooperation with the Department for Economic and Social Development of the United Nations, of an international seminar-cum study tour on mini-hydropower development in Hangzhou province.

44. Since energy was the prime mover for development, any energy shortage in developing countries constituted a severe constraint on development. Despite the fact that energy production in developing countries over the past 30 years had increased fourfold, supply still fell short of demand. It was not only necessary but also in the long-term interests of the international community to assist developing countries in developing their energy resources and initiating energy conservation programmes.

45. China was adopting a number of policy measures designed, inter alia, to promote energy conservation and to raise energy efficiency, to speed up hydroelectric power development, to focus on research and development relating to new and renewable sources of energy and to ensure broad dissemination of new technologies that were energy efficient, energy saving and environmentally friendly.

The meeting rose at 5.05 p.m.

UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-SEVENTH SESSION

Official Records

SECOND COMMITTEE
12th meeting
held on
Monday, 12 October 1992
at 10 a.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 12th MEETING

Chairman:	Mr. PIRIZ-BALLON	(Uruguay)
later:	Ms. DIOP (Vice-Chairman)	(Senegal)
later:	Mr. PIRIZ-BALLON	(Uruguay)

CONTENTS

AGENDA ITEM 84: INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

(a) IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COMMITMENTS AND POLICIES AGREED UPON IN THE DECLARATION ON INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION, IN PARTICULAR THE REVITALIZATION OF THE ECONOMIC GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

(b) IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY FOR THE FOURTH UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT DECADE

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

This record is subject to correction.
Corrections should be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned *within one week of the date of publication* to the Chief of the Official Records Editing Section, Room DC2-750, 2 United Nations Plaza, and incorporated in a copy of the record.

Corrections will be issued after the end of the session, in a separate corrigendum for each Committee.

92-56942 6068S (E)

Distr. GENERAL
A/C.2/47/SR.12
22 October 1992
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: FRENCH

The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 84: INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT (A/47/88-S/23563, A/47/225-S/23998, A/47/305-E/1992/96, A/47/312-S/24238, A/47/344, A/47/351-S/24357, A/47/356-S/24367, A/47/375-S/24429, A/47/437)

(a) IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COMMITMENTS AND POLICIES AGREED UPON IN THE DECLARATION ON INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION, IN PARTICULAR THE REVITALIZATION OF THE ECONOMIC GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES (A/47/363, A/47/397)

(b) IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY FOR THE FOURTH UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT DECADE (A/47/270-E/1992/74)

General debate

1. Mr. OSSA (Director of the Development Policy and Analysis Division), introducing the Secretary-General's report on the implementation of the Declaration on International Economic Cooperation, in Particular the Revitalization of the Economic Growth and Development of the Developing Countries (A/47/397), emphasized that the adoption of the text had been followed almost immediately by a series of shocks, notably the Persian Gulf crisis, which had had a serious impact on many developing countries and many countries of Eastern Europe; a sharp recession in key industrialized countries; general deterioration of the situation in Africa as a result of civil strife and drought; and economic collapse in Yugoslavia. Moreover, the recent turmoil in international currency markets had increased uncertainties in the world economy. In his report, the Secretary-General had stressed the importance of sustained growth of the world economy and the need for the policy changes in both developed and developing countries in order to accomplish the objectives of the Declaration. In the two years since the adoption of the Declaration, the situation of the world economy had clearly deteriorated. Growth had slowed in most of the industrial economies, and some of them had been in outright recession. In countries with economies in transition, output had plummeted. Prospects for the immediate future were therefore particularly bleak.

2. With respect to the situation of the developing countries, while there had been a certain amount of economic recovery in Latin America, in Africa conditions had deteriorated, principally because of the collapse of commodity prices.

3. The industrialized countries had rightly stressed inflation-fighting measures in their macroeconomic policies. They had generally neglected non-monetary measures to stimulate growth, and policy coordination had been inadequate, as recent instability in the currency markets demonstrated.

4. The programmes of economic adjustment and the policy reforms which had been undertaken by many developing countries had been remarkable and appeared

(Mr. Ossa)

to be producing results. They incorporated a large degree of trade liberalization, in marked contrast to corresponding policies in the industrialized countries. The impasse in the Uruguay Round of negotiations constituted a major failure in an area of international cooperation that was considered central to the Declaration.

5. Significant progress had been achieved in the resolution of the debt crisis affecting several developing countries. Indeed, there had been a turnaround in the flow of resources to developing countries. However, the availability of concessional resources had been increasing only slowly and the overall ODA targets agreed upon in the International Development Strategy and reaffirmed in the Declaration on International Economic Cooperation remained far from being reached.

6. The Declaration also laid great stress on human development and protection of the environment, and some progress had been made, notably in the area of human rights. The eradication of poverty and the enhancement of human resources had clearly become key elements of national development strategies, and the Rio Summit had demonstrated that environmental consciousness was gaining ground.

7. In short, while the overall results were mixed, certain positive results had been achieved in several areas of the Declaration, especially the economic reforms implemented by developing countries to reduce their external debt and to increase commercial resource flows. Efforts to integrate the economies in transition into the world economy were proceeding, and a broader consensus was emerging on courses of action to resolve their problems. But there had also been major disappointments. The initiative required to create a supportive international environment had been lacking. The stalemate in the Uruguay Round had an extremely negative factor, and slow economic growth and fiscal disequilibria had made it harder to reap the peace dividend.

8. Introducing the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the International Development Strategy (A/47/270), he recalled that it had been considered by the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 1992. As a preliminary appraisal of the Strategy, the report had been of considerable interest. Both the Declaration and the Strategy reflected a growing consensus and a political commitment to strengthening international cooperation for development, and they covered essentially the same areas, though the Strategy was a more action-oriented document. In many ways the report and the Strategy complemented each other.

9. The conclusions of the Secretary-General regarding implementation of the Strategy were basically the same as those of his report on the Declaration. Both pointed to disappointments in many areas and to challenges arising from a rapidly changing global situation. Examination of past failures was undoubtedly important, but even more important was the need for the international community to strengthen its efforts to achieve the objectives set out in those two major documents.

10. Ms. Diop (Senegal) took the Chair.

11. Mr. ZAMAN (Pakistan), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77, recalled that in the Declaration on International Economic Cooperation, adopted by the General Assembly at its eighteenth special session, the international community had made a commitment to adopt measures that would create an international economic environment favourable to the development of the developing countries. The General Assembly subsequently had adopted a new International Development Strategy, whose aim was to ensure that the 1990s would be a decade of accelerated development in the developing countries, to strengthen international cooperation and to close the gap between rich and poor countries. The International Development Strategy also had important social and political objectives that underlined the need to enhance the participation of populations in the economic and political life of their respective countries. In both reports (A/47/397 and A/47/270), the Secretary-General had pointed out three major developments that threatened to upset some of the basic premises of those documents, namely the conflict in the Persian Gulf, the dissolution of the former Soviet Union and the recession in the developed economies, to which must be added an international economic environment which had not been conducive to growth and development.

12. Although the vast majority of the developing countries had adopted far-reaching reform measures designed to place greater reliance on market forces and the private sector, to liberalize trade and to increase monetary and fiscal discipline, the developed North had not supported them in those efforts, but had continued to limit access to their own markets through measures of trade protectionism. Therefore, it was vitally important to bring the Uruguay Round of Multilateral Trade Negotiations, currently stalemated, to a successful conclusion.

13. The need for accelerated structural changes in the world economy remained one of the top priorities of the developing world. In that process, it was essential to provide greater economic assistance on concessional terms to the developing countries.

14. The International Development Strategy recognized that external indebtedness was a main obstacle to revitalization in developing countries, while progress in debt reduction had been modest except in a few cases. Only a comprehensive and durable solution which would take into account the need to significantly reduce the stock and service of all types of debt to all types of debtor countries and include anticipatory measures would lead to the alleviation of the debt burden.

15. The Group of 77 wished to emphasize the continuing validity and relevance of the Declaration on International Economic Cooperation and the International Development Strategy and expressed the belief that a concerted global action was required to achieve sustained and balanced economic growth and to resolve inherent inequities in the world monetary, financial and trading systems.

16. Mr. BARNETT (United Kingdom), speaking on behalf of the European Community, said that the reports of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the Declaration on International Economic Cooperation (A/47/397) and on the implementation of the International Development Strategy (A/47/270) were very useful documents that had taken into consideration the evolving world situation.

17. The period since the completion of the Strategy had been marked by great changes. Those changes had already been reflected in the Cartagena Commitment, which encapsulated the outcome of the eighth session of UNCTAD. He welcomed the partnership in development forged there, which committed all member States to engage in a constructive dialogue, inspired by the need to achieve a more equitable and efficient world economy.

18. The changes that would be required in all countries in order to achieve sustainable development would not be achieved without determined efforts both by national Governments and the international community.

19. The eighth session of UNCTAD had affirmed that development, for which individual countries retained the primary responsibility, should be a people-centred and equitable process, whose ultimate goal should be to improve the human condition. That required, not just a stable macroeconomic environment, but also good government. Reforms could have significant political and human costs in the short term, but if they were implemented with determination and were given adequate external support, important long-term benefits would result.

20. Both the Strategy and the Declaration had stressed the need for supportive economic policy frameworks at both the national and international levels. As the Secretary-General's report on the Strategy indicated, industrialized countries had a central role to play in stimulating world economic growth. To that end, it would be necessary to persist with medium-term non-inflationary growth strategies and to intensify efforts to achieve a strengthened open multilateral trading system. In the industrialized countries, in spite of some signs of recovery from the recession, economic activity remained at a comparatively low level.

21. External indebtedness remained an impediment to the growth of many developing countries, especially in Africa, and must therefore be urgently addressed; the objective was not just to reduce indebtedness but also to bring debt burdens into line with the payment capacity of individual countries. The low level of domestic savings must also be increased. The agreement by the Paris Club to offer substantially improved terms for the most indebted countries was an important breakthrough which should improve the prospects for a return to external viability for many of the poorest countries, which were a particular concern to the Community.

22. It was also essential for creditors to reduce further the debt stock of heavily indebted countries. The Community welcomed the call made by the Group

(Mr. Barnett, United Kingdom)

of Seven for creditors to recognize the special problems of some lower-middle-income countries and the progress made in reducing the commercial debt of middle-income countries. The outlook was finally improving, in particular for the latter category.

23. The European Community also welcomed the historic agreement reached at Rio, which marked a further step in forging a partnership for sustainable development. The mobilization of adequate resources was essential for that purpose, and the Community reaffirmed its commitment to the United Nations target of 0.7 per cent of GNP for official development assistance.

24. The Strategy had drawn attention to the need to create a supportive environment for international trade in general and for the trade of the developing countries in particular, a point underlined at UNCTAD VIII. A more open trading system would give impetus to the growth of the developing countries. An early conclusion of the Uruguay negotiations would underpin the economic reforms already undertaken by developing countries and the countries with economies in transition and would help to roll back protectionist trends. Trade barriers must therefore be removed and markets opened up.

25. Population pressures were a problem of first importance. In 2050 the planet would have 10 billion inhabitants, almost double its present population. The resulting problems in the areas of food production, jobs, education, infrastructure and services were considerable. The United Nations, and in particular UNFPA, had already done pioneering work in the sector, but there was much more to do. The International Conference on Population and Development would need to focus on such questions, taking into account their implications for environmental degradation.

26. The alleviation of poverty would be hard to achieve unless population growth was reduced. More than a billion people now lived in absolute poverty, and most of the population growth would be in the poorest population groups. It was therefore vital for Governments to devise effective strategies to reduce poverty and promote human development. Moreover, in Africa poverty had been aggravated by natural disasters such as the very serious drought affecting southern Africa in particular. With regard to the tragic situation in Somalia and Sudan, the Community would continue to contribute substantially to the short-term relief efforts for the afflicted populations and to help those countries pursue their long-term development. The United Nations New Agenda for the development of Africa, adopted by the General Assembly at its forty-sixth session (resolution 46/151, annex), should provide a useful framework for those efforts.

27. Democracy and the protection of human rights were closely linked with development. The transformation of the economic and social situation in many Latin American countries following their return to democracy provided an eloquent testimony to the linkage between development and democracy, and the Community would continue to support positive approaches in that area. It was

(Mr. Barnett, United Kingdom)

still too early to assess the historic dimension of the profound transformations in the countries of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. The Community was participating actively in the efforts to smooth their transition from command to market economies, which required comprehensive macroeconomic and structural reforms, and to ease the many difficulties which were arising. It would continue to ensure that such assistance did not affect development cooperation with developing countries, to which it attached the highest importance.

28. The United Nations system had an important contribution to make in monitoring the implementation of the Declaration and the Strategy and it had the necessary machinery for that purpose. The ending of the cold war presented an unparalleled chance to build a more secure and more prosperous global economic community, and the implementation of the Declaration and the Strategy must contribute to that ambitious goal.

29. Ms. DOWSETT (New Zealand) said that the changes in the international political scene had failed to exert a positive influence on the world economy. It was true that for some developing countries the debt outlook had improved and the net transfer of resources had been reversed, but it remained imperative to provide fresh impetus for growth through international trade.

30. The goals both of the Declaration on International Economic Cooperation and of the International Development Strategy were based on a double approach: on the one hand reforms at the national level, and on the other the establishment of favourable conditions for international economic cooperation. While New Zealand and other countries, in particular the developing countries, had undertaken extensive macroeconomic reforms despite the difficulties involved, the same could not be said of the main industrialized countries, which had not succeeded in carrying out structural adjustment policies or reaching agreement in the multilateral trade negotiations. On the contrary, competing trade blocs had emerged and agricultural subsidies and other forms of protectionism had proliferated. In this way the industrialized countries had put the brakes on the development process in the world and particularly in the countries with the most vulnerable economies, i.e. the majority of the membership of the United Nations.

31. The 1990s were a period of transition, and the decisions taken at the Conference on Environment and Development were vital ones. Failure to make progress could only harm the achievement of the objectives of Agenda 21 and therefore the establishment of a mode of sustainable development. That was why it was important urgently to promote international cooperation and the development of the developing countries.

32. Mr. MOTA SARDENBERG (Brazil), speaking on behalf of the States members of the Common Market of the South (MERCOSUR), stressed the importance of the Declaration on International Economic Cooperation and the International

(Mr. Mota Sardenberg, Brazil)

Development Strategy, whose implementation rested on three pillars: structural adjustment in the developing countries, the adoption of sensible macroeconomic policies in the developed countries, and international cooperation.

33. In order to adjust their economies the developing countries must seek to redefine their economic and political relations both in the regional and in the global context. It was in that spirit that Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay had signed the treaty establishing a common market which, far from aiming at exclusion, ought to enable them to achieve a bigger presence in world markets. They also intended through the treaty to harmonize not only their sectoral policies but also their macroeconomic ones, with a view to achieving genuine regional integration. Their initiative was therefore in conformity with the recommendations of both the Declaration and the Strategy.

34. As for the second pillar, it was impossible not to be worried by the fact that the industrialized countries had not reduced their macroeconomic imbalances. Those imbalances, the source of the instability in the world economy and the international financial system, were the result of inadequate fiscal and monetary policies.

35. The third pillar, international cooperation, must be built upon a foundation favourable to development. While it was true that some progress had been made with regard to the external debt of the developing countries, other factors continued to act as a hindrance to growth. That was the case, in particular, with multilateral trade relations. Although the developing countries had committed themselves to integration, their efforts towards liberalization had been thwarted by the stalemate in the Uruguay Round.

36. Both the Declaration and the Strategy emphasized the importance of United Nations bodies in regard to the goals established, and it was for the Committee to give a renewed impulse to the process of their implementation. It was therefore disquieting that the Secretariat's report on the implementation of the Strategy was too superficial to provide the basis for an in-depth discussion of the global and multisectoral objectives established and that it did not make recommendations for the purpose of a review. Similarly, while a number of countries had provided the Secretariat with information regarding the measures taken to implement the Strategy, the fact that that documentation had not been issued restricted the scope of the discussions. The States members of MERCOSUR considered that the revitalization of economic growth and development should, because of its importance, remain on the agenda of the Committee and should be discussed annually.

37. Mr. KALPAGE (Sri Lanka) noted that, despite its ambitious objectives, the International Development Strategy had not so far had any significant impact on development. Except in South-East Asia and China, per capita incomes had not increased. World output had declined in 1991, while projections indicated only a modest recovery in 1992. What were the reasons for that negative

(Mr. Kalpage, Sri Lanka)

trend? One, of course, was the severe economic contraction in Eastern Europe following the disintegration of the Soviet Union, but there were also more fundamental and persistent reasons. They must be identified and remedial measures taken immediately. The priorities of the Strategy retained all their validity; it was the premises on which the Strategy was based that had been invalidated. The disintegration of the Soviet Union, the Gulf war and the recession in the industrialized countries had created an economic environment which was not conducive to implementation of the Strategy. That latter factor undoubtedly had the greatest negative impact, affecting growth in the developing countries severely. The 7 per cent growth rate envisaged in the Strategy implied massive investment, which would have to be genuinely global in view of the integration of the world economy. As it was, investment capital in the developing countries was still scarce and, in the developed countries, economic policy had not been aimed at growth. Many developing countries were trying to increase domestic savings and investments and, to that end, had undertaken major reforms intended to promote market forces and the private sector, economic stabilization, monetary and fiscal discipline, more realistic exchange rates and trade liberalization. However, those changes had been achieved at substantial social and political cost; the abolition of food subsidies had exacerbated malnutrition; some adjustments had been politically so unpalatable that they threatened democratically elected Governments. Despite those efforts, the terms of trade had not improved, and commodity prices had declined drastically. Trade barriers had been strengthened, shutting the developing countries out of markets in the developed countries. Resource flows into the developing countries had declined.

38. In that regard, it was urgent to address the problem of debt in an objective manner. The Uruguay Round negotiations to establish an equitable trading system should be speedily concluded. The developing countries had opened up their economies, but they were unable to attract foreign private investment, because they did not possess the necessary infrastructure. At the same time, some major donors were saddled with fiscal deficits and deteriorating social and economic conditions. That was what explained their reluctance to make additional resources available.

39. Macroeconomic management in developed countries relied on policies which resulted in increased trade barriers, higher subsidies and reduced economic activity. Uncoordinated, and pursued as they were within national boundaries, such policies had not paid dividends. Unemployment had increased, while the slow-down in activity in certain industries was deepening the recession and, owing to the lack of purchasing power in the rest of the world, there could be no increase in demand for imports from developed countries. Demand in the developing countries would spur growth in industry, construction and agriculture in the developed countries. It must be realized that protectionism, subsidies and monetary policies alone could provide only short-term solutions. A global approach would result in more lasting solutions. In other words, the developed countries must adjust their policy in order to generate growth.

(Mr. Kalpage, Sri Lanka)

40. Policies that were relevant 40 years earlier should not be maintained, and innovative approaches were needed at international and national levels. The best advantage must be taken of existing factors of production. Transnational corporations were now playing an important role as organizers of economic activity, and could act as engines of growth. They were the major investors. For their part, most of the developing countries possessed both raw materials and human resources, but capital from the transnational corporations flowed elsewhere. The developed countries continued to attract four fifths of world-wide foreign direct investment. That was not the best way to organize production on a global scale. While raw materials were located in the developing world, production took place in the developed countries, which was where the markets were to be found. The transnational corporations had therefore to pay more for the transport of raw materials. In addition, they spent more on research into technology in order to meet the scarcity of cheap skilled labor. That additional cost was passed on to the consumer. It would be to the advantage of both the consumer and the producer if raw materials were processed in the developing countries.

41. Efforts to eliminate poverty must be adjusted to the situation in each country. Sri Lanka had adopted an innovative approach involving partnership between large-scale investors and small local producers, particularly through participation in share capital ownership. That approach was aimed at exploiting the creative potential of the poor, which was currently dormant. A large part of the population lived below the poverty-line; by providing support, the State had launched a poverty-alleviation scheme to benefit that segment of the population. For the most part, the rural poor did have the potential to be producers and to participate actively in the development process. The country's culture and history had conferred a certain wisdom on the Sri Lankan people, in addition to talent, entrepreneurial ability and the aptitude necessary for productive partnership in the development process. What they lacked was the capital to acquire technical skills, technology and the necessary infrastructure. There was thus a vast latent potential which had yet to be duly harnessed. The Government was therefore making every effort to attract investors to rural areas in order to establish industries which would harness the production potential of the poor and, wherever possible, locally available raw materials. It was also endeavouring to create forward and backward linkages with the production units in the villages. Sri Lanka's experience in that regard was being shared with other countries in the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC).

42. Mr. Piriz-Ballon (Uruguay) resumed the Chair.

43. Mr. GONZALEZ (Chile) said that future prospects for the world economy hardly gave cause for optimism. The recession was directly affecting the developing countries, whose fate depended largely on the support of the industrialized countries. Macroeconomic imbalances and widespread unemployment, used by the industrialized countries to justify their huge subsidies to certain sectors, were long-term problems and could not be

(Mr. Gonzalez, Chile)

expected to be solved in the current decade. There were, however, two factors which should be viewed in a new light.

44. Firstly, it must be acknowledged that cycles of prosperity and recession had always existed in the world economy. Since that phenomenon was one of the characteristics of the world economy, it should not be an obstacle to the measures taken to stimulate growth and development. If international cooperation depended on the sound economic performance of the developed countries, it would never be effective; similarly, the International Development Strategy could not work if the main industrialized countries adopted monetary policies without taking account of their impact on the economies of the developing countries.

45. Secondly, it must be borne in mind that the developing countries had implemented structural adjustment policies to give effect to their pledge to revitalize their economies. They had done so at the cost of a widespread impoverishment of the most underprivileged sectors of society and at the risk of political instability. It was therefore essential, for the sake of progress and stability, to fulfil the Strategy-related objectives. In order to achieve that end, the developed countries must demonstrate a strong political will, opening up their markets and abolishing the protectionist measures they had introduced. The Strategy must also be adjusted so as to facilitate its implementation and, in particular, offset the negative effects for the developing countries of the absence of technology transfer.

46. Participation by the private sector was crucial, given the proposed goals and the globalization of economic phenomena. In addition, priorities must be redirected and, through a reduction in defence spending, funds released for international cooperation, which was vital in bringing the developing countries back into the mainstream of international trade. Those countries must cease to be mere producers of commodities and become the primary source of demand for goods and services. Raising their purchasing power was essential to the revitalization of economic growth in the industrialized countries.

47. Mr. GUERRERO (Philippines) said that 1990 had been an "annus mirabilis", a year of good intentions. Faced with the desolate state of the world economy in the previous decade and following the extraordinary political changes in Central and Eastern Europe, the General Assembly had adopted the Declaration on International Economic Cooperation, in particular the Revitalization of Economic Growth and Development of the Developing Countries. That had been followed by the World Summit for Children, the Second United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries held in Paris, the publication of the Human Development Report and the adoption of the International Development Strategy; but in 1991, disillusionment had set in, particularly as a result of the stalled Uruguay Round. The Committee now had the task of reviewing the implementation of the Declaration on International Economic Cooperation and that of the International Development Strategy, two basically similar texts.

(Mr. Guerrero, Philippines)

With hindsight, it could be seen that the hopes raised had not been fulfilled. To be sure, several promising documents had been adopted since then, including the Cartagena Commitment, the framework conventions on biodiversity and climate change, the Earth Charter and Agenda 21, to mention but some. Moreover, an agency which held out great promise, the Commission on Sustainable Development, was soon to be established.

48. He recalled the six major goals of the International Development Strategy, namely: a surge in the pace of economic growth in the developing countries; a development process responsive to social needs; an improvement of the international systems of money, finance and trade so as to support the development process; sound macroeconomic management, nationally and internationally; a decisive strengthening of international development cooperation; and a special effort to deal with the problems of the least developed countries. He then demonstrated, with reference to the report of the Secretary-General on international cooperation for economic growth and development (A/47/270) that none of those goals had been attained. On the subject of the fifth goal, concerning a strengthening of international development cooperation, he wondered what more still needed to be done after the Cartagena Commitment, Agenda 21 and the adoption of resolution 45/264. Would the establishment of a Commission on Sustainable Development help in any way towards a solution?

49. The euphoria of 1990 seemed to have faded. It was time to meet specific challenges. The world's economic and social problems had been analysed repeatedly and agreement had generally been reached on possible solutions to them. The conceptual solutions had been exhausted. What must be done was to act, and, in particular, display a greater political will in two areas: first, in studying carefully the recommendations made by the United Nations in the previous two years, and, second, implementing them singly and collectively. In that connection, he drew attention to the recommendations singled out by the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Development.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK (A/C.2/47/L.1 and Add.1)

50. Ms. KELLY (Secretary of the Committee) reviewed the state of preparation of documentation and proposed that the discussion on part III of item 78 and on the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) should be deferred, since some of the necessary documents had not yet been issued.

51. Mr. CLARKE (United Kingdom), speaking on behalf of the European Community, expressed strong reservations about altering the Committee's programme of work, even though he understood the reasons put forward. The delegations of the States members of the European Community would have to consult with each other before taking a decision in the matter.

52. Mr. PAPADATOS (Greece) asked on what date the discussion on UNITAR would be held, when the report of the Secretary-General on that question would be ready and what the nature of the report would be.

53. Mr. CLARKE (United Kingdom), speaking on behalf of the European Community, reaffirmed that he reserved his position on the proposal to postpone the discussion on UNITAR and to defer consideration of part III of item 78.

The meeting rose at 12:15 p.m.

UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-SEVENTH SESSION

Official Records

SECOND COMMITTEE
13th meeting
held on
Monday, 12 October 1992
at 3 p.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 13th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. PIRIZ-BALLON (Uruguay)

later: Mr. GUERRERO (Philippines)
(Vice-Chairman)

CONTENTS

EXPRESSION OF SYMPATHY IN CONNECTION WITH THE RECENT EARTHQUAKE IN EGYPT

AGENDA ITEM 84: INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT (continued)

(a) IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COMMITMENTS AND POLICIES AGREED UPON IN THE DECLARATION ON INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION, IN PARTICULAR THE REVITALIZATION OF THE ECONOMIC GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES (continued)

(b) IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY FOR THE FOURTH UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT DECADE (continued)

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

This record is subject to correction.
Corrections should be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned *within one week of the date of publication* to the Chief of the Official Records Editing Section, Room DC2-750, 2 United Nations Plaza, and incorporated in a copy of the record.

Corrections will be issued after the end of the session, in a separate corrigendum for each Committee.

92-56948 6027S (E)

Distr. GENERAL
A/C.2/47/SR.13
15 October 1992

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

/...

The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

EXPRESSION OF SYMPATHY IN CONNECTION WITH THE RECENT EARTHQUAKE IN EGYPT

1. The CHAIRMAN, on behalf of all the members of the Committee, expressed sympathy to the Government of Egypt in connection with the recent earthquake in that country.

2. Mrs. HASSAN (Egypt) thanked the Chairman and delegations for their expressions of condolence regarding the earthquake that had struck her country.

AGENDA ITEM 84: INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT (continued) (A/47/88-S/23563, A/47/225-S/23998, A/47/305-E/1992/96, A/47/312-S/24238, A/47/344, A/47/351-S/24357, A/47/356-S/24367, A/47/375-S/24429, A/47/437)

(a) IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COMMITMENTS AND POLICIES AGREED UPON IN THE DECLARATION ON INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION, IN PARTICULAR THE REVITALIZATION OF THE ECONOMIC GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES (continued) (A/47/363 and 397)

(b) IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY FOR THE FOURTH UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT DECADE (continued) (A/47/270-E/1992/74)

3. Mr. LAOUARI (Algeria) said that one of the most worrisome aspects of the current world situation was the steady decline of the economies of the developing countries, in particular the developing countries of Africa, which was aggravated by unfavourable trends in the world economy and unfair and unbalanced international economic relations. The developing countries continued to be hampered by a crushing external debt, the net transfer of their resources to the developed countries, difficulties in gaining access to world markets, and deteriorating commodity prices. All those factors seriously jeopardized the bold reforms and the development strategies that many developing countries had undertaken. Moreover, the slump in world trade, the prolonged recession in the developed countries and the efforts to integrate the countries of Central and Eastern Europe into the world economy were exacerbating the difficult situation of the developing countries.

4. In order to meet the challenges facing the world economy, the international community must demonstrate the political will necessary to deal with economic problems with the same diligence and assiduity that it had shown in the settlement of international political issues. The international community as a whole, and the developed countries in particular, must take prompt measures to translate their commitments into action. There should be greater dialogue between the developed and the developing countries on questions of macroeconomic policy and structural adjustment, specific arrangements should be made to re-evaluate commodity prices, a lasting global solution must be found to the problem of external debt, and an open,

(Mr. Laouari, Algeria)

transparent and non-discriminatory trade system must be established in order to enable the economies of developing countries to become fully integrated in the world economy.

5. However, nothing could be achieved without the solid and stable financing needed to meet those objectives. His delegation was convinced that the Secretary-General's proposal on the convening of an international conference on the financing of development would contribute to the search for innovative solutions to the most pressing problems facing the international community.

6. The United Nations system should do its utmost to promote development through the consistent implementation of the policies it had adopted, while taking measures to strengthen inter-agency cooperation and coordination. The restructuring of the Secretariat and the economic and social sectors of the United Nations, the revitalization of the Economic and Social Council and the redynamization of operational activities for development should reinforce the role and activities of the United Nations system, making multilateral action more credible and efficient, and promote greater awareness and collective political will to meet the challenges of the moment.

7. Mr. GOUMENNY (Ukraine) said that the strengthening of peace and security was closely connected with the elimination of economic, ecological and other non-military threats. The adoption two years previously, of the Declaration on International Economic Cooperation, had heralded a new phase in United Nations economic and social activities. Despite the rapid changes taking place in the world, the principles of the Declaration remained valid and were in tune with the processes currently under way in Ukraine. His country was intent on carrying out market reforms and building an open economy with a view to integration in the world economy; it hoped to leave the rouble zone and introduce a national convertible currency. Ukraine rejected excessive defence spending and hoped thereby to free intellectual, industrial and natural resources for production.

8. With its pressing need for external resources, Ukraine wished to develop cooperation with international financial organizations and was endeavouring to attract investment, technology and specialists. A recently adopted law on foreign investment provided rights and guarantees to foreign business. His delegation was convinced that Ukraine and other countries with economies in transition could make the most effective use of foreign investment; economic reforms in those countries would provide a new source of financial resources and technologies for the developing world more rapidly than any other form of investment. Implementation of the Declaration was closely connected with that of the International Development Strategy.

9. His delegation agreed with the Secretary-General's report (A/47/270) that the integration of the Eastern European countries and the successor Republics of the Soviet Union in the world economy as well as their own transformation would be a long and difficult process. While each country had to rely above

(Mr. Goumenny, Ukraine)

all on itself to carry out its economic reforms, his country greatly appreciated all external support for its efforts, such as those that might be provided through the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development. He fully understood the remarks of the representatives of IMF and the World Bank to the effect that the provision of credit to countries in transition must not be at the expense of commitments to the developing countries. The achievement of the objectives of the International Development Strategy was dependent on the availability of additional resources. Although the "peace dividend" had proved elusive, disarmament needed to become a powerful stimulus for development both by ensuring the necessary political climate and making available financial and economic resources. In that connection, his delegation supported the elaboration of a reliable system for the prevention of military conflicts on the basis of the Charter of the United Nations. In conclusion, it was important not to repeat the mistakes of the past, which consisted in attempting to solve everything at once. Instead, efforts should be concentrated on making progress in the areas where conditions afforded the best chances for success.

10. Mrs. SABHA (India) said that, as a universal body that respected the principle of the sovereign equality of its Member States, the United Nations was the appropriate forum for providing policy guidance on international development cooperation. The complex interrelationship between peace, security and development required that all those goals should be pursued independently.

11. Economic growth presupposed vigorous national effort. With the support of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), 50 developing countries had undertaken stabilization and support programmes and had taken measures to achieve fiscal consolidation, adjust exchange rates, privatize State enterprises and liberalize trade regimes. They had done so in hopes of gaining greater access to world markets, capital flows, technology and concessional resources and in the expectation that their increasing vulnerability, as a consequence of their greater dependence on the world economy, would be cushioned by more predictable exchange rates and interest rates, and appropriate corrections in the internal and external balances of developed countries. Unfortunately, those expectations had not been met.

12. The recent currency crisis in Europe reflected the continuing unpredictability and uncertainty of the economies of industrialized countries. Several years earlier, her delegation had sponsored a resolution on the convening of the United Nations conference on money and finance for development, and it appeared that the time was ripe for further consideration of that idea or, at least, for subsuming it under the proposal to convene an international conference on the financing of development.

13. The debt strategy was still inadequate and did not take account of the resource requirements of low-income countries that continued to meet their

(Mrs. Sabha, India)

international obligations at great sacrifice. Morever, most countries were still a long way from achieving the target set for official development assistance (ODA), and negotiations on the tenth replenishment of the International Development Association (IDA) seemed to be deadlocked.

14. The most serious problems remained in the area of trade. Protectionism was on the rise in the very countries that had argued for increased liberalization in developing countries. Quantitive restrictions, anti-dumping legislation, voluntary export restraints and managed trade had eroded multilateralism in favour of unilateral action. The increasing tendency towards regionalism was heightening concerns that the rules of multilateralism would be further eroded. The Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations remained stalled, and a balanced outcome of the Round had yet to be achieved.

15. The transfer of scientific knowledge, know-how, technology and skills to developing countries remained dismal. Obsessive concern with the protection of intellectual property rights could suffocate rather than stimulate innovation, particularly when public policy and the development needs of the developing countries were ignored. Similarly, other incidental considerations were being used as a pretext for not transferring technology that could lead to quantitative leaps in productivity.

16. Particularly disquieting was the attempt to link economic and social indicators, on the one hand, to the imposition of new conditionalities in international economic cooperation on the other. A new political impetus was needed in that area, and her delegation hoped that discussions during the current session of the General Assembly would provide such an impetus.

17. Ms. YANG Yan Yi (China) said that, as a result of the recession in the industrialized countries and ineffective coordination of macro-economic policies, implementation of the Declaration on International Economic Cooperation and of the International Development Strategy had been disappointing. The objectives of a balanced outcome of the Uruguay Round and of increased market access to developing countries had yet to be achieved and many developed countries had still to achieve the target of 0.7 per cent of GNP for official development assistance (ODA). A durable and broad solution of the external debt problem had yet to be found and commitments on financial resources and transfer of technology for the environment had yet to be honoured. The international community had a responsibility to give strong support to the efforts of the developing countries through the creation of a favourable international economic environment. She therefore hoped that the developed countries would curb protectionism in trade and increase their financial flows and technological transfer to the developing countries, and also take fully into account the interests of those countries when strengthening coordination of macroeconomic policies. The resources of the multinational financial institutions should be substantially increased to meet the needs of the developing countries. China would continue to expand its exchanges with other countries in the areas of trade, science and

(Ms. Yang Yan Yi, China)

technology. In April, China had hosted the forty-eighth session of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, which had contributed greatly to the deepening of economic cooperation in that region.

18. Mr. HERRERA (Guatemala), speaking also on behalf of the delegations of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Nicaragua and Panama, said that the international economic environment had not favoured the growth and development of the developing countries. The developed countries continued to subsidize agriculture, and they had not fulfilled their commitment to halt and roll back protectionist measures. The access of developing countries' exports to world markets was becoming increasingly difficult. The prices of two of Central America's principal exports, coffee and bananas, were extremely low and were subjected to drastic quota policies and abuse by middlemen.

19. In keeping with the International Development Strategy for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade, the countries of Central America had undertaken economic reforms that promoted reliance on market forces, entrepreneurship and privatization. They had also endeavoured to coordinate their positions on monetary and fiscal measures. Through the Central American Economic Plan of Action (PAECA), the countries of Central America had begun a process of economic recovery and growth. However, additional financial resources were required to ensure the success of that large-scale project.

20. The countries of Central America had embarked on an aggressive programme to promote traditional and non-traditional exports and increase foreign investment with a view to enhancing the economic and social well-being of their populations. They had also become members of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and were carrying out their obligations under that Agreement. While some aspects of PAECA had been covered by the Special Plan of Economic Cooperation for Central America, the countries of the region must solve their major social and economic problems in order to consolidate democracy and ensure stable and lasting peace.

21. The priorities contained in the International Development Strategy and the Declaration on International Economic Cooperation remained valid, and it was important to seek appropriate negotiated solutions within the United Nations. In particular, attention must be given to the eradication of poverty in Central America, as well as to the provision of assistance to displaced persons, returnees and refugees. In some countries of the subregion, literacy must be increased in order to make better use of human resources, particularly in the rural areas and among women and children.

22. While the region of Latin America and the Caribbean as a whole had experienced an improvement in economic growth, the per capita gross domestic product (GDP) had fallen below its 1980 level. Export earnings had levelled off and were even beginning to fall while imports had increased as a result of economic recovery and trade liberalization; those developments could have very serious repercussions unless economic growth was reactivated and international

(Mr. Herrera, Guatemala)

markets were liberalized to ensure fair and remunerative prices for developing countries' exports.

23. Rich and poor nations alike must renew their commitment and reaffirm their political will to engage in international economic cooperation in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations. The international community must recognize that high unemployment rates could be reduced only by accelerating economic growth. However, economic growth should not be measured only by a country's gross national product. Economic growth and development that centred on the human being should take account of what was produced, the way in which it was produced and its social and environmental cost. The countries of Central America had sought to include the aspect of social development in their efforts to promote sustained economic growth. They were convinced that international cooperation must take account of popular participation in order to ensure that development was carried out in the interests of, and controlled by, the population at large.

24. Mr. KRASAVCHENKO (Russian Federation) said that while the countries with economies in transition were gradually being integrated into the world economy, his delegation had considerable reservations regarding the intensification of that process. Russia was in the midst of profound transformations of its economic system, its social structure and political institutions, which would enable it to occupy the position worthy of a great Power in the world community. That would only be possible with the transition to a full market economy, which entailed the liberalization of the economy, privatization of State property, structural reform of the economy, including its demilitarization and adaptation to consumer demand, the creation of market conditions and an active social policy.

25. To achieve those aims, his Government had proposed reform comprising three basic stages, each with its particular priorities: development under crisis conditions and financial stabilization; rehabilitation of the national economy and reapportionment of the public and private sectors; and economic upswing and structural reform of the economy. The entire reform was scheduled to be completed in 1997. Other objectives included the complete abolishment of quantitative restrictions in external trade; gradual harmonization of national prices with world prices, lowering of export tariffs and introduction of a unified import tariff; export support and expansion of markets; and the transition to a convertible rouble, initially for current operations, and subsequently for capital operations. That last objective would be a key factor in the further integration of the Russian economy in the world economy. Rather than banking on the continued export of fuel and raw materials, his Government preferred to develop the manufacturing industry. In order to attract foreign investment, efforts were being made to guarantee property rights, achieve convertibility of the rouble, ratify international agreements on mutual protection of investments and reduce the top rate of individual income tax to 30 per cent. Foreign investors would be granted privileges aimed at reducing the risk of capital loss, allowing them to deduct

(Mr. Krasavchenko, Russian Federation)

initial operating losses from their tax payments and maintaining the tax system in force at the time of conclusion of contracts for the duration of the contract.

26. The reform had begun under particularly unfavourable conditions and the results of the first nine months were not encouraging. Prices had increased more steeply than had been expected. It had not been possible to stabilize the exchange rate of the rouble and production had continued to fall. However, some progress had been made on the way to achieving a balanced market. It had been possible to salvage the financial system and hyperinflation had been avoided. The confidence of the international community and foreign partners had been maintained, the level of economic activity had risen and people were gradually getting used to the new system. Most important of all, there was no turning back in the economic, social or political spheres. Russia was in the process of creating a flourishing democratic State, and deserved the support of the world community in that endeavour.

27. Mr. BABAI (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that, at the national level, the developing nations had done their utmost to implement the commitments and policies contained in the International Development Strategy and the Declaration on International Economic Cooperation, undertaking bold reforms to liberalize their economies, encourage the private sector, stabilize monetary and fiscal discipline, eradicate poverty and develop human resources. Yet despite all those measures, sustained economic growth and development remained far out of reach.

28. Not all the obstacles stemmed from domestic issues. In the prevailing unpropitious international environment, characterized by increased protectionism and trade barriers, high long-term interest rates, continued indebtedness and scarcity of financial resources, continuation of economic reforms in the developing countries would be, if not impossible, at any rate extremely difficult. Thus, for instance, there had as yet been no response to the call for additional financial resources to ensure the effective implementation of the International Development Strategy. At the same time, developed countries had refused to play their part in implementating the Agreements. They had a responsibility to correct their fiscal imbalances, to lower long-term real interest rates, to stabilize exchange rates in major currencies, and to promote access by the developing countries to their markets, financial resources and technology. To facilitate and accelerate implementation of the Declaration and the Strategy, those external problems must be properly addressed.

29. His delegation vigorously rejected the view that the Gulf War, recession in the developed market economies and the dissolution of the Soviet Union had been the main factors responsible for a lack of progress in implementing the Declaration and the Strategy. The real cause was a lack of enthusiasm and political will on the part of developed countries to achieve those ends. Some

(Mr. Babai, Islamic Republic of Iran)

developed countries laboured under the misconception that, where economic issues were concerned, any gain for the developing countries meant a loss for themselves. Unless that misconception was dispelled, the chances for progress and implementation of the agreements would remain slim.

30. In spite of the many profound and unprecedented changes which had occurred since the adoption of the Strategy and the Declaration, the main assumptions on which those two documents were based remained fully valid. Their implementation would bring about a significant change in the international economy and contribute greatly to the elimination of poverty and hunger, to human resource development, to population control, and to sustainable development for all nations. It was to be hoped that short-sighted approaches which could lead only to short-term achievements would be replaced by far-reaching incentives to achieve long-term benefits.

31. Mr. MOMEN (Bangladesh) said that events since the adoption of the Strategy and the Declaration had jeopardized the prospects for their implementation. The 1990s were proving to be a decade, not of development, but of transition. Commitments must thus be reaffirmed and translated into concrete action, in order to ensure that the transition led to achievement of the goals envisaged in the Strategy and the Declaration.

32. The performance of the economies of both developed and developing countries over the past 21 months did not give grounds for optimism about future prospects. Despite the stress placed by the Strategy on additional financial resources, development finance remained scarce. Furthermore, the Uruguay Round remained stalled, the peace dividend elusive, external debt remained a major problem, and international trade was threatened by a resurgence of protectionism and a deterioration in the terms of trade.

33. The Strategy had stressed the need for domestic economic reform, and most developing countries, including Bangladesh, had accordingly undertaken major policy reforms at considerable social and political cost. But those efforts had failed to bear fruit, largely because of the unfavourable external environment. Development partners had for the most part failed to match developing countries' efforts with commensurate support measures. Realization of priority objectives had been hampered by serious resource constraints. In spite of a growing recognition that revitalization of economic growth and development was directly linked to protection of the environment, there was still a considerable discrepancy between the amount of resources required to implement the objectives of Agenda 21 and the amount actually available.

34. The report of the Secretary-General (A/47/397) projected negligible or negative per capita growth rates for a large number of least developed countries in 1992; added to which, the increase in the number of those countries had placed additional constraints on resources available for implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries

(Mr. Momen, Bangladesh)

for the 1990s. Enhanced and concessionary resource flows to those 47 countries, along with an appropriate international debt strategy, was of the utmost importance for overall implementation of the Strategy and the Declaration.

35. With a view to securing timely implementation of the Strategy, his delegation attached particular importance to: fulfilment of the official development assistance targets, especially for the least developed countries; a substantial increase, in real terms, in the tenth replenishment of the International Development Association; trade liberalization by all countries and stable commodity prices; global macroeconomic policy coordination, and especially a reform of the international monetary and financial system; an early and balanced conclusion of the Uruguay Round; structural adjustment policies with an adequate social safety net; a more pragmatic international debt strategy; the transfer of environmentally sound technology on concessional terms; concrete resource commitments for sustainable development programmes; new and additional resources for human resource development; and the relaunching of the North-South dialogue. The international community must redouble its efforts with a view to achieving the targets of the Strategy.

36. Mr. ELSIDDIG (the Sudan), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that in a statement made at the previous meeting on behalf of the European Community and its member States regarding the deteriorating situation in Somalia, the representative of the United Kingdom had also expressed concern at the situation in the Sudan. The Sudan was a former British colony. Since its independence in 1956, it had had continuously to contend with the consequences of the colonizing Power's policy of "divide and rule", which had forbidden free movement of the population between the north and south of the country so as to create a spirit of hostility. Successive Governments had attempted to solve the problem, most recently through the negotiations chaired by the President of Nigeria.

37. His delegation wished to stress, first, that the security problem in the Sudan was nearing a solution as a result of dialogue between the parties. Secondly, the security problem in his country was one that existed in many countries of the world; it was a domestic problem that his Government was doing its best to solve. Thirdly, his delegation rejected any attempt to link the Somali and Sudanese problems: more than 90 per cent of Sudanese territory was under the control of the Government. That Government was using all peaceful means to solve its problems, and, in cooperation with its friends in the region, was doing its utmost to solve the problems of the Horn of Africa, assuming a vital role in that regard. The United Kingdom representative's concerns would thus shortly be dispelled.

38. Recent World Bank reports confirmed that the Sudan's economy was strong. It had enough land and water resources to solve the problems of famine and malnutrition in Africa, with assistance from the developed countries. Debate on the Sudan might thus more appropriately focus on the country's economic problems and on appropriate assistance measures.

39. Mr. OSSA (Director, Division of Development Policy and Analysis, Department of Economic and Social Development), responding to concerns raised by delegations during the debate, said that many delegations seemed to agree with the secretariat that the orientations and policies agreed on in the Declaration and the Strategy remained valid. The eighth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development had reaffirmed the guidelines and policies set forth in the Declaration and the Strategy. Nevertheless, the question of priority actions arose. In that regard, he drew attention to document E/1992/INF/8 which listed areas for priority international action and detailed measures to be taken to revitalize growth in the world economy, improve the international policy environment, facilitate development in the developing countries, and speed up the process of integration of the economies in transition into the global economy.

The meeting rose at 5.20 p.m.

UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-SEVENTH SESSION

Official Records

SECOND COMMITTEE
14th meeting
held on
Wednesday, 14 October 1992
at 3 p.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 14th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. PIRIZ-BALLON (Uruguay)

CONTENTS

AGENDA ITEM 78: DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION (continued)

This record is subject to correction.
Corrections should be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned *within one week of the date of publication* to the Chief of the Official Records Editing Section, Room DC2-750, 2 United Nations Plaza, and incorporated in a copy of the record.

Corrections will be issued after the end of the session, in a separate corrigendum for each Committee.

92-57002 6056S (E)

Distr. GENERAL
A/C.2/47/SR.14
20 October 1992

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

/...

The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 78: DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION (continued) (A/47/80, A/47/82-S/23512, A/47/83, A/47/88-S/23563, A/47/225-S/23998, A/47/267, A/47/268, A/47/279-E/1992/79 and Corr.1, A/47/283-E/1992/83, A/47/290-S/24204, A/47/305-E/1992/96, A/47/308-E/1992/97, A/47/344, A/47/351-S/24357, A/47/356-S/24367, A/47/361-S/24370, A/47/375, A/47/391, A/47/404, A/47/437 and A/47/477)

1. Mr. OSSA (Director, Division of Development Policy and Analysis, Department of Economic and Social Development), said he wished to introduce the note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the President of the Economic and Social Council concerning the report of the Commonwealth Group of Experts on the Impact of Global Economic and Political Change on the Development Process (A/47/477). While many of the political changes signalled in the document had been unfavourable to development, they had also opened up new opportunities which called for a new approach to international cooperation.

2. The informal exchange of views had identified three areas of prime concern: the need to find an appropriate role for the State in countries undergoing late industrialization; the apparent contradiction between the need to enforce conditionality and the considerable convergence of opinions on macroeconomic management and the role of markets; and the need for measures to persuade traditional donor countries to increase official development assistance (ODA) at a time when strategies based on self-reliance necessitated increasing the role of domestic savings and reducing that of external aid.

3. Turning to the report of the Secretary-General on the net transfer of resources between developed and developing countries (A/47/404), he said that, whereas throughout the 1980s there had been a net outflow of financial resources from the developing countries, during the last two years the trend had been reversed, with a net inflow to those countries of almost $10 billion in 1990 and $32.5 billion in 1991. That shift was not altogether reassuring, since it was due, first, to a net inflow of private capital, which was of a short-term nature and could be reversed at short notice, and, secondly, to official transfers in the form of grants, largely associated with the Gulf conflict; those could be expected to decrease, as had already occurred in Africa.

4. The shift in private financial flows to many of the 15 highly indebted countries, was principally due to economic reform and debt restructuring agreements. In addition, confidence in Latin America and some other developing countries had been increased by a growing differential in interest rates, particularly vis-à-vis the United States, making financial markets in those countries less risky and more remunerative. There was no knowing whether private financial flows to those countries could be sustained once the current sluggishness in the North came to an end.

(Mr. Ossa)

5. The sluggishness in the industrial economies had led not only to lower interest rates in countries like Japan and the United States, but also to the further deterioration of the terms of trade of developing countries. When that deterioration was taken into account, the transfer of financial resources to capital-importing developing countries was considerably reduced in real terms, particularly in the case of Africa.

6. It was still too early to establish whether the recent reversal in real transfer of resources, and net financial transfers in particular, would persist. If successful, efforts by countries to consolidate their economic reforms and increase domestic savings and investment rates should bring an increase in the share of long-term capital inflows and a relative reduction in that of short-term, speculative capital movements, thus increasing the sustainability of the net transfer. At the same time, fiscal consolidation and financial rehabilitation in the North were also essential, not only to stimulate world trade and to generate more realistic prices for raw materials, but also to facilitate official financial transfers to the South.

7. Increased net transfers were not a sufficient condition for economic development, but must be accompanied by increased domestic savings and their investment in productive activities. The vast majority of those developing countries undertaking economic reforms urgently required foreign resources to reinforce their domestic savings efforts, in order to speed up the restructuring process. While a plentiful supply of private capital in the form of commercial credits and foreign direct investment could be expected, subject to the availability of favourable conditions, official resources, including increased ODA and multilateral credits, were also essential for long-term investments in human resources and infrastructure. Currently net official credit to capital-importing development countries remained well below what it had been in 1983.

8. With regard to short-term measures for the implementation of the Declaration on International Economic Cooperation for Development, he stressed that top priority should be given to the measures identified by the Secretary-General in document E/1992/INF/8.

9. Mr. ATTIGA (Assistant Administrator and Regional Director, Regional Bureau for Arab States and Europe of the United Nations Development Programme), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on the unification of Yemen (A/47/283), drew attention to the policy measures introduced by the Government of Yemen to diversify its economy and to establish a more efficient and political economic machinery for the effective use of its national resources and international assistance. The country's need for assistance had been further increased by the challenges created by unification, the massive return of migrant workers and the consequences of natural disasters and it was essential that the international community should demonstrate its support for the historic changes that were taking place.

(Mr. Attiga)

10. While UNDP had significantly contributed towards Yemen's development by assessing its indicative planning figure (IPF) for the 1992-1996 cycle at the level of the combined IPFs of the former Yemen Arab Republic and the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, those resources were still far below the country's needs. Consequently, UNDP had undertaken to construct the country programme for Yemen as a general programming framework for technical assistance. In addition, the round-table conference on Yemen had proved very useful.

11. In conclusion, he stated that the Government of Yemen, with the assistance of the United Nations, had made exceptional efforts to ensure favourable conditions within Yemen for support measures from the international community and to consolidate its national unification within a democratic and market oriented framework.

12. Mr. KASSANGANA (Regional Commissions, New York Office) introduced the report on cooperation in fisheries in Africa (A/47/279) and drew attention, in particular, to the 13 specific recommendations contained in the final part of the report.

13. Mr. MASOOD (Pakistan), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77, said that, while the reversal in the flow of net resources between developed and developing countries was a welcome development, it was still very marginal. Its maintenance would depend on a favourable international economic environment and on continuing confidence in those economies which had been attracting the flow of financial resources.

14. Although inflows of foreign direct investment into developed market economies had declined, they still accounted for more than four fifths of such inflows world wide in 1990, demonstrating that the developing countries continued to lag behind in attracting investments of any significance. He also expressed concern over the inequitable distribution of the benefits from foreign direct investment to developing countries, Africa and the least developed countries had received a mere 7 per cent and 0.7 per cent of those inflows, respectively, and he called for a globalization of international economic investment to ensure that such flows reached all parts of the world.

15. Both domestic and external resources were essential to the reactivation of growth and development; if the rate of development of the developing countries was to be accelerated, their savings efforts must be supplemented with considerable external resources. In addition, the burden of debt-service payments must be reduced and financial flows for development from such major sources as official financial assistance, commercial banks, direct private investment and multilateral financial institutions significantly increased.

16. Finally, he drew attention to the concern of the Group of 77 at the adverse effect which the increased demands for resources from the countries of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union might have on the availability of

(Mr. Masood, Pakistan)

resources to the developing countries and sought assurances that assistance to those countries would not be given at the expense of the developing countries.

17. Mr. SALLAM (Yemen) said that the Secretary-General's report (A/47/283) had recognized the difficult economic situation facing Yemen as a result of the merger of the economic and social infrastructures following unification, in addition to the new economic amd social burden resulting from the Gulf War. Those difficulties included increased unemployment, price rises and a budget deficit. At the same time, the flow of aid had decreased and Yemen had had to cope with refugees from the Horn of Africa and had suffered earthquakes in several regions. His Government had endeavoured to alleviate those difficulties and had drafted a law to encourage both domestic and foreign investment. The private sector had been given an important role to play and the Government had reduced military expenditure, redirecting resources to investment and service projects. A Round-table Conference had been held in Geneva to review Yemen's social and economic policy and discussed development objectives and general and sectoral policies, and the Governing Council of UNDP at its most recent session had underscored Yemen's urgent need for technical assistance in administration development, in particular with regard to restructuring, financial administration, reform of the civil service and expansion of medical and educational services.

18. The Republic of Yemen, which had been united on 22 May 1990 on the basis of democracy and political pluralism, would shortly hold its first parliamentary elections, and he called on the international community to support that development by providing the necessary technical and economic assistance.

19. Mr. AHMIA (Algeria), speaking also on behalf of Egypt, Libya and Tunisia, said that the Secretary-General's report on cooperation in fisheries in Africa (A/47/279-E/1992/79 and Corr.1) provided valuable statistical information on the fish production of the African countries bordering the Mediterranean Sea. The delegations of Egypt, Libya, Tunisia and Algeria hoped that the report that would be submitted in implementation of Economic and Social Council resolution 1992/54 would be even more complete and would not only provide statistical data but also deal with substantive issues concerning cooperation in fisheries among African countries, taking due account of all subregions.

20. Ms. DOWSETT (New Zealand) said that, in order to take maximum economic advantage of the fisheries resources within their exclusive economic zones, African States must secure international market opportunities. At the same time, however, African fishery resources were threatened by overexploitation. The Secretary-General's report placed primary emphasis on African States' improved management of resources within their respective exclusive economic zones. Effective international cooperation between coastal African States and States that fished in the high seas beyond the exclusive economic zones of African States was needed to ensure that fishing activities on the high seas did not adversely affect resources within African exclusive economic zones.

(Ms. Dowsett, New Zealand)

21. Since 1989, the international community had made substantial progress towards ending large-scale pelagic drift-net fishing. However, problems relating to the sustainable use and conservation of living marine resources in the high seas remained. New Zealand and other South Pacific countries attached great importance to the forthcoming intergovernmental conference that would consider the problems involved in the conservation of straddling fish stocks and highly migratory fish stocks.

22. Her delegation was pleased to note the promising prospects for enhanced regional cooperation in Africa. The newly formed Ministerial Conference on Fisheries Cooperation among African States bordering the Atlantic Ocean was proving to be a most effective coordinating mechanism. Regional mechanisms could provide valuable assistance through the collection and dissemination of statistical and biological information; fisheries management and training; and technical assistance in the development of fisheries policies and in negotiations on the issue of licences, collection of fees or matters pertaining to surveillance.

23. New Zealand was one of the 16 members, and a major financial supporter, of the Forum Fisheries Agency. The Agency reflected its members' interest in deriving maximum economic benefits from their marine resources, as well as their recognition of the severe development constraints imposed on most of them owing to their small size, lack of land-based resources and distance from major markets. Shared concerns about conservation of fisheries resources were focused, in particular, on the highly migratory and main commercial species.

24. It was possible to draw parallels between fisheries cooperation in Africa and in other regions of the world. Agenda 21 provided a new basis for action on the issue of living marine resources. In that respect, the current examination of the development of African fisheries and constraining factors could not be more timely.

25. Mrs. NASHANDI (Namibia) said that her delegation fully supported the view that cooperation in fisheries must be pursued among African States and at the international level. Namibia had formulated objectives and development strategies that should result in joint fisheries surveillance and research systems in the region, in particular between Namibia and Angola. The main objective of those strategies was to secure sustainable development of fisheries.

26. Following the introduction of strict marine conservation policies, Namibia's pilchard and whitefish catches already began to increase. A new sea fisheries law had been enacted to encourage the development of a Namibian-owned industry, promote training for Namibians in all fishing sector activities and review the industry marketing structure with the aim of encouraging exports and greater domestic consumption of fish. However, Namibia's exclusive economic zone was difficult to monitor, not only because of its size but also because of the limited resources of personnel and equipment.

(Mrs. Nashandi, Namibia)

27. Attracted by the abundance of pelagic fish, crustaceans and marine life found in the fishing grounds off the west coast of southern Africa, various international fishing companies had taken to poaching in Namibian waters; that had led to the depletion of many species. Continued illegal fishing by foreign vessels belonging to private fishing companies remained a matter of serious concern, and the Namibian Government had taken measures to combat such activities.

28. Namibia's territorial integrity and national security continued to be jeopardized by South Africa's continued occupation of Walvis Bay and the offshore islands. Namibia was currently engaged in negotiations aimed at integrating those territories into the rest of Namibia. A joint transitional administration of a limited duration would be established over Walvis Bay and the offshore islands on 1 November 1992.

29. While the Secretary-General's report on cooperation in fisheries in Africa covered the whole of sub-Saharan Africa's fisheries sector, Namibia's involvement and participation at the regional level were restricted to the region of the Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC). The collective maritime and fishery management policies were beginning to produce results. Given the investment already being made in shore-based processing capacity, the contribution of the fisheries sector to the economy of the region was expected to increase over the next five years.

30. Mr. WIBISONO (Indonesia) said that, between 1983 and 1989, almost US$ 1 trillion had flowed out of the capital-importing developing countries to the developed countries and international financial institutions. While there had been modest positive net flows to some developing countries in the past two years, the overall situation had not changed. The adverse external economic environment had affected the various capital-importing developing countries in different ways. Some of those countries had been hard hit by depressed world-market prices of raw materials and commodities, while others had been affected by high interest rates and volatile exchange rates. Excessive indebtedness, reduced official and commercial financial flows, escalating protectionism and lack of adequate access to critical technology had combined to neutralize the effects of any positive measures that the developing countries had undertaken.

31. The developed countries must implement macroeconomic policies to confront the recession and make the international environment conducive to growth and development. A positive net transfer of resources should be ensured at the official, commercial and multilateral levels. In that respect, Member States that had not yet done so should endeavour to fulfil their commitment to allocate 0.7 per cent of their gross national product (GNP) to official development assistance (ODA).

32. At the same time, efforts should be made to reduce interest rates and stimulate non-inflationary growth in the world economy. Measures must be

(Mr. Wibisono, Indonesia)

taken to reverse the almost insuperable problem of indebtedness, which had drained essential resources from most developing countries. A comprehensive and durable solution that would ensure a reduction in the stock and service of debt was essential. In that regard, his delegation supported the proposal to convene an international conference on the financing of development, which should address the particular needs of the developing countries for the 1990s and beyond.

33. The success of the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations would ensure freer access of developing countries' exports to major markets. Measures must also be taken to improve commodity markets, which were in a state of extreme disarray. Since commodities were a main source of export earnings for most developing countries, Indonesia fully supported the proposal to convene a world conference on commodities.

The meeting rose at 4.30 p.m.

UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-SEVENTH SESSION

Official Records

SECOND COMMITTEE
15th meeting
held on
Thursday, 15 October 1992
at 3 p.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 15th MEETING

Chairman:	Mr. PIRIZ-BALLON	(Uruguay)
later:	Mr. GUERRERO (Vice-Chairman)	(Philippines)
later:	Mr. PIRIZ-BALLON (Chairman)	(Uruguay)

CONTENTS

AGENDA ITEM 89: TRAINING AND RESEARCH

(b) UNITED NATIONS UNIVERSITY

AGENDA ITEM 105: PROGRAMME PLANNING

This record is subject to correction.
Corrections should be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned *within one week of the date of publication* to the Chief of the Official Records Editing Section, Room DC2-750, 2 United Nations Plaza, and incorporated in a copy of the record.

Corrections will be issued after the end of the session, in a separate corrigendum for each Committee.

92-57032 6061S (E)

Distr. GENERAL
A/C.2/47/SR.15
21 October 1992

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

/...

The meeting was called to order at 3.25 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 89: TRAINING AND RESEARCH (A/47/312-S/24238)

(b) UNITED NATIONS UNIVERSITY (A/47/31)

1. Mr. DE SOUZA (Rector, United Nations University), introducing the report of the Council of the United Nations University (A/47/31), said that the University had just moved into its new permanent headquarters in Tokyo. The new building would be formally inaugurated at the end of February 1993, and the Governing Council had rescheduled its regular December 1992 session so as to coincide with that occasion. He thanked the Government and people of Japan for having provided such outstanding modern facilities, and also thanked the Governor of the Tokyo Metropolitan Government who had played a key role in making available the grounds on which the building had been constructed.

2. The move to the new headquarters marked a new phase in the institutional growth and development of the University. In its early years, the University's work had been conducted in collaboration with a variety of networks of existing institutions and had been coordinated from the Centre in Tokyo. The University's first Research and Training Centre (RTC), the UNU World Institute for Development Economics Research (UNU/WIDER), had been established in 1985. Work on other such centres and programmes had been moving at an increasingly faster pace. The third RTC, the International Institute for Software Technology (UNUIIST), in Macau, had become operational in July and the Generalitat of Catalunya had just agreed to contribute US$ 21 million over the next seven years towards the establishment and operation of an RTC in Barcelona, devoted to the subject of governance, State and society. He would be signing a memorandum of understanding with the Generalitat the very next day to undertake preparatory activities on areas or issues likely to be included in the future programme of that centre. Preparatory work towards the possible setting up of a programme for marine science and ocean affairs was under way in Italy with financial support from the regional authorities of Sardinia, and an international feasibility study team funded by the Government of the province of Ontario, Canada, would soon begin exploring the possibility of establishing a centre or programme in Ontario on environment and health. The Institute of Advanced Studies in Japan would start its activities in the next few months, and should be fully operational within two or three years.

3. Institutional and programmatic growth was now managed within the framework of the periodic meetings of the Conference of Directors of Research and Training Centres and Programmes. Those ongoing discussions had pointed to the need to further promote the relationship between the University and the RTCs, as well as for closer academic links and interactions among the latter. The University was elaborating an extensive academic programme of research and policy studies, post-graduate and other training activities, to take place in Japan between 1993 and 1995. The projects would deal with some critical and

complementary aspects of the management of global interdependence. The first group of activities would focus on the future role of the United Nations, with particular attention to peace-keeping and official development assistance. The other clusters of issues would deal with environmental matters and methodologies and experiences for large-scale problem-solving. The Council would review those proposals at its next session.

4. The University had sought to assist the United Nations and UNESCO to the fullest extent possible, and in the current year had contributed to a study of the role of the United Nations system in the field of economic and social development in the 1990s. The UNU/WIDER programme on economics of environment and development had provided significant inputs to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development with regard to resource requirements for a global environmental compact for sustainable development. The University had been chosen by the Conference secretariat to take the lead in writing the chapter of Agenda 21 on sustainable mountain development, within the framework of its Programme on Mountain Ecology and Sustainable Development. With a view to promoting fuller interfacing with the United Nations system, it also intended to consult more closely with senior United Nations officials in planning its programmes and projects.

5. His long-term goal was to build up an institution geared to the creation and mobilization of knowledge in furtherance of the United Nations goals. In just 20 years, the University had managed to carve out for itself a privileged niche in the international academic community. Research results in fields such as nutrition problems in developing countries, the mountain ecosystem, alternative energy systems, environmental issues and economic reforms in former socialist countries had received international recognition. Over 2,000 young researchers from developing countries had received training as UNU fellows, and about 300 publications and five periodicals had been issued. As a growing institution, the University must constantly evolve in the areas of programme planning, implementation, evaluation, fund-raising and administration. In order for it to fulfil its mandate, the University must have access to adequate resources, primarily through endowment income, but also through annual operating and project contributions from governmental and non-governmental sources. In that context, continued support would be crucial in the years to come.

6. Mr. KOIKE (Japan) said that the University had been established in 1973 in order to gather knowledge to help resolve pressing global problems of human survival, development and welfare. With drastic and unforeseen changes taking place all around the globe, its role had now become more important than ever. It took time for an academic institution to achieve the solid results that would secure its reputation. Although the University was still far from fulfilling the vision of its founders, it had done significant work during its brief existence. The University should contribute to the work of other United Nations bodies as it had to the Rio Conference; and the United Nations family should utilize the University more actively. In that way, it would come to

(Mr. Koike, Japan)

serve as an important arm of the United Nations, providing research services to the entire system.

7. The University had taken the initiative of launching a new plan of action to address issues such as environmental engineering, the role of the United Nations in the twenty-first century, official development assistance, peace-keeping operations and urban technologies. It was working to secure more active involvement of Japanese researchers with expertise in those areas, and to organize other activities at the new headquarters. He hoped that that initiative would enable the world to cope more effectively with issues transcending national boundaries and requiring a collective global effort. The research and training centres and programmes had an important role to play in fulfilling the University's overall objectives, by linking scholars from varying political and cultural backgrounds around the world without moving them from their home universities. His delegation thus welcomed the recent establishment of the International Institute for Software Technology (UNUIIST), and the imminent signing of the memorandum of understanding on the establishment of a new RTC on governance, State and society in Barcelona. His delegation was pleased to announce that the Tokyo Metropolitan Government had formally decided to provide the Institute of Advanced Studies in Japan with land and a building adjacent to the University's new headquarters; construction would start the following month.

8. With the expansion of its network of institutions, the utmost care must be taken to ensure that the University maintained its coherence, its integrity, and a common vision and strategy. Welcome measures had already been taken to guard against the danger of fragmentation. Such efforts should continue, and the role of the University headquarters as nerve centre of that network should be strengthened.

9. If the University was fully to carry out its mandate, adequate funds must be made available to it. Unfortunately, the Endowment Fund remained at a level far below that originally targeted. His delegation appreciated the Rector's fund-raising efforts and expressed the hope that Governments, non-governmental organizations and public and private donors would make financial contributions to the University commensurate with the important role envisioned by its founders. At the same time, administrative costs must be reduced as much as possible. The University Council had a vital role in that regard, and its function should accordingly be strengthened.

10. Mr. KALPAGE (Sri Lanka) said that the University had a unique mandate to mobilize the intellectual resources of the world to address pressing global problems. Its achievements were already considerable, and the issues identified in its second medium-term perspective were of vital concern to the developed and developing countries.

11. His delegation welcomed the programme on multilateralism and the United Nations. The results of UNU research should be widely disseminated,

(Mr. Kalpage, Sri Lanka)

particularly within the United Nations system: it was thus encouraging to note that the University was giving particular attention to that matter, and that the UNU/WIDER report entitled "Toward a Global Environmental Compact" had been quoted extensively and adopted by the preparatory Committee for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. He also noted with pleasure that the International Institute for Software Technology had become operational, and expressed the hope that the University would establish more such centres with a global outlook in the developing countries.

12. Sri Lankan institutions and scholars had been closely associated with UNU programmes from the outset, and several studies carried out by UNU, such as the UNU/WIDER country study on stabilization and adjustment policies and programmes, had been of direct interest to his country.

13. Mr. Guerrero (Philippines), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

14. Mrs. MAIR (Jamaica) said that the University had the unique function of harnessing the efforts of the international scientific community to the resolution of global problems and, in accordance with its second medium-term perspective for the years 1990-1995, was focusing on such critical issues as peace and conflict resolution, the world economy and global life support systems, all of great relevance to the international community and, in particular, to the agenda of the United Nations.

15. She noted the establishment of the Institute for Software Technology and the University's contribution to work on the environment, such as its research on mountain ecology and sustainable development. She also noted with pride that the 1992 World Food Prize had been awarded to Dr. Nevin Scrimshaw, Director of the UNU Programme on Food and Nutrition for Human and Social Development.

16. Although the World Institute of Development Economics Research in Helsinki enjoyed considerable international acclaim, it was seldom identified as an integral unit of the University, which was consequently deprived of due credit for the Institute's achievements. She stressed the need for more aggressive strategies to overcome the relative invisibility of the University and to ensure that its collaboration with the international academic community was expanded, particularly in the developing countries. Enhanced coordination with other United Nations bodies with comparable sectoral mandates was also necessary to ensure the effectiveness of the University's work, particularly in the context of the Organization's current restructuring and revitalization. The United Nations system should take fuller advantage of the University's research capacity and its networking capabilities.

17. The University's move to its new headquarters would provide a valuable opportunity to extend the range of its academic activities and to enhance its interaction with the scientific community of Japan. That, together with the other developments she had highlighted, promised to open a new, dynamic phase

(Mrs. Mair, Jamaica)

in the University's career and to bring it closer to its goal of a unique international community of scholars inspired by the principles and purposes of the United Nations Charter. As the chairperson of the University Council, she appealed to all Member States to make new or additional contributions to assist the University in meeting those objectives.

18. Mr. JIN Tongchao (China) said that the United Nations University had made commendable headway in an international climate hardly conducive to institutional development, and he pledged China's continued support for the work of the Institute.

19. China regretted that its suggestion to reduce the frequency of University Council meetings to once a year with consequent savings of US$ 100,000, had not been taken up. He therefore suggested that the cost of one meeting should be borne by the University and of the other meeting by the Council members and that the $100,000 thus saved should be reallocated for research and training purposes.

20. Mr. Piriz-Ballón (Uruguay), Chairman, resumed the Chair.

AGENDA ITEM 105: PROGRAMME PLANNING (A/47/6, programmes 11-24, 30-34, 37 and 45)

21. Mr. CLARKE (United Kingdom), speaking on behalf of the European Community and its member States, drew attention to programme 16, "Environment" which had not been discussed by the Committee for Programme and Coordination (CPC) in September 1992 at its resumed thirty-second session owing to the non-availability of the relevant documentation, and stressed the importance of the proposed amendment to paragraph 16.14 (new paragraph 16.15), which referred to the need for the medium-term plan to take full account of decisions adopted during the current session of the General Assembly concerning the outcome of UNCED.

22. Turning to the proposed amendment to paragraph 16.31 (new paragraph 16.32), his delegation believed that the sentence in question should be revised to read: "The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development recommended the elaboration of an international convention to combat desertification in those countries experiencing serious drought and/or desertification, particularly in Africa, with a view to finalizing such a convention by June 1994", thus bringing it into line with the language used in Agenda 21.

23. The European Community and its member States hoped that those proposed amendments would be endorsed by the Committee in any report to be prepared on the subject and it requested the Chairman to prepare a draft decision for transmission to the Fifth Committee after appropriate consideration by the members of the Second Committee.

24. Mr. NKOUNKOU (the Congo) said, with reference to programme 17, "Science and technology for sustainable development", that his delegation supported the recommendations by CPC and he stressed that the revisions proposed within that programme should place greater emphasis on the needs of developing countries, particularly with regard to the strengthening of their technological capacities and their access to new technologies.

25. Turning to programme 30, "Regional cooperation for development in Africa", he said that, while he supported the CPC recommendations, he questioned the advisability of creating new institutions and suggested that efforts should be made instead to strengthen those already existing. At the same time, close attention should be given to the impact of the structural adjustment programmes implemented by African countries, and, in particular, to the social costs of those programmes. Particular attention should also be given to the question of the external debt of middle-income countries.

26. The Congo remained convinced of the key importance for subregional integration of the multinational programming and operational centres and stressed the need to strengthen those centres. The decision to stop financial support for the positions of coordinators of women's issues in those centres, violated the spirit of the African Charter for Popular Participation in Development and Transformation, adopted at Arusha in 1989 and would seriously jeopardize the participation of African women in development.

27. With reference to programme 45, "Africa: critical economic situation, recovery and development", he noted with regret the failure of the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development and expressed the hope that the broad international consensus on the need to support the development efforts of African countries, expressed in the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s, adopted in 1991, would be translated into appropriate concerted action.

28. The CHAIRMAN said that he intended to transmit copies of the summary records containing the Committee's views on item 105 to the Chairman of the Fifth Committee.

The meeting rose at 4.35 p.m.

UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-SEVENTH SESSION

Official Records

SECOND COMMITTEE
16th meeting
held on
Tuesday, 20 October 1992
at 10 a.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 16th MEETING

Chairman:	Mr. PIRIZ-BALLON	(Uruguay)
later:	Mr. GUERRERO (Vice-Chairman)	(Philippines)

CONTENTS

AGENDA ITEM 78: DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION (continued)

This record is subject to correction.
Corrections should be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned *within one week of the date of publication* to the Chief of the Official Records Editing Section, Room DC2-750, 2 United Nations Plaza, and incorporated in a copy of the record.

Corrections will be issued after the end of the session, in a separate corrigendum for each Committee.

92-57096 6074S (E)

Distr. GENERAL
A/C.2/47/SR.16
26 October 1992

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 78: DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION (continued)

1. Mr. FLEISCHHAUER (Under-Secretary-General, The Legal Counsel), introducing the Secretary-General's report on large-scale pelagic drift-net fishing (A/47/487), said that General Assembly resolution 44/225 had noted that many countries were disturbed by the increase in the use of large-scale pelagic drift-nets, which were widely considered to threaten the effective conservation of living marine resources, and recommended that moratoria should be imposed on all large-scale drift-net fishing by 30 June 1992 unless effective conservation and management measures were taken, that progressively large-scale drift-net fishing activities should be reduced in the South Pacific region with a view to cessation by 1 July 1991, and that further expansion of large-scale pelagic drift-net fishing in all the other high seas should cease immediately. General Assembly resolution 45/197 had called for full implementation of General Assembly resolution 44/225. General Assembly resolution 46/219 had recalled the two previous resolutions and called upon all members of the international community to achieve, by 30 June 1992, a 50 per cent reduction in large-scale pelagic high seas drift-net fishing, and to ensure that such fishing areas were reduced and that a global moratorium on such fishing was fully implemented by 31 December 1992.

2. The Secretary-General's report (A/47/487) had been drawn up on the basis of replies received to a note verbale from the Secretary-General. The first part of the report reviewed the contributions of intergovernmental organizations and drew particular attention to activities or conduct inconsistent with the terms of resolution 46/215. The second part presented a review by region. He noted the signature by Canada, Japan, the Russian Federation and the United States of America of the Convention for the Conservation of Anadromous Stocks in the North Pacific Ocean and drew attention to the increasing support for the Convention for the Prohibition of Fishing with Long Drift-nets in the South Pacific (the Wellington Convention). Numerous positive measures had been taken and he said that the Secretary-General hoped that further efforts would be made in that direction.

3. Mr. RAMACHANDRAN (Executive Director of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat)), introducing the Secretary-General's report on the proposed United Nations conference on human settlements (Habitat II) (A/47/360) requested by General Assembly resolution 46/164), said that the Commission on Human Settlements had the previous year recommended the convening of a second United Nations conference on human settlements, to be known as Habitat II. The considerable achievements in the field of human settlements had not been sufficient to arrest and reverse deterioriation in the living conditions of the urban population in the developing countries, and even in the industrialized countries. In its resolution 46/164, the General Assembly had therefore decided to consider at its current session the question of convening a second conference on human settlements.

(Mr. Ramachandran)

4. The report outlined the current state of human settlements and attempted to analyse the current crisis of homelessness and inadequate shelter. The 1976 Habitat Conference had been held in response to that crisis, and had been followed by the International Year of Shelter for the Homeless in 1987, the adoption of the Global Strategy for Shelter to the Year 2000 in 1988, and the inclusion of a human settlements chapter in Agenda 21, adopted by the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED). Human settlements were the physical framework for sustainable development within which UNCED agreements and programmes would have to be implemented. The report pointed to some of the reasons for the insufficient progress which had been made since the first Habitat Conference, including issues such as urban environmental infrastructure, energy, urban transport, women in development, sustainable development and the impact of external debt and structural adjustment programmes. A world conference of the scope of Habitat II would therefore be both desirable and timely. He suggested that a special preparatory committee be established with universal membership of both States and all other interested groups, such as non-governmental organizations, civic and community groups, academic institutions, professional bodies, the business community and civic leaders at the local and municipal levels. The report expressed a preference for convening a conference in 1996 rather than 1997. There was the symbolic significance of 1996 as coming 20 years after the first Habitat Conference, and four years was ample time to make the necessary preparations; if the conference were to be held in 1996, the decision would have to be taken at the present session. The report contained no detailed statement of the programme budget implications of holding a second Habitat conference, but did identify a range of costs likely to be involved. Financial implications depended on a number of elements such as timing, venue and practical arrangements, which needed to be decided on first by the General Assembly.

5. Mr. MASOOD (Pakistan), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77, said that despite the recommendations of the 1976 United Nations Conference on Human Settlements, human physical living conditions had further deteriorated world wide, especially in the developing countries. It had not been possible in 1976 to foresee the full impact on human settlements of population growth, the urbanization of poverty and the increase in socio-economic stress caused in the developing countries by the implementation of structural adjustment programmes. The dismal statistics on urban living conditions contained in the Secretary-General's report (A/47/360) represented only the tip of the iceberg, and did not concern the rural population.

6. Action on human settlements required not only the participation of the private sector, but also the involvement of Governments. The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) had addressed the issue of human settlements in the context of sustainable development. The eight programme areas identified in Agenda 21 required particular attention. It was time to review the decisions taken at the 1976 Conference and formulate new mechanisms for the implementation of effective human settlement policies, taking into account the environmental dimension. He was in favour of taking a

(Mr. Masood, Pakistan)

decision at the current session of the General Assembly regarding the convening of a second conference on human settlements, in particular in view of the Secretary-General's proposal to hold the conference in 1996 to coincide with the twentieth anniversary of the first Conference. The task of organizing the proposed conference should be left to the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements.

7. Mr. Guerrero (Philippines), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

8. Mr. CLARKE (United Kingdom), speaking on behalf of the European Community and its member States, said that a thorough review of the strategies recommended at the 1976 Conference on Human Settlements was becoming necessary in order to bring those strategies into line with the overall objectives of Agenda 21, and in particular, with its chapter 7, on promoting sustainable human settlement development. The unanimous recommendation of the Commission on Human Settlements to hold a review conference was therefore appropriate.

9. The development of major cities had had some positive effects, such as the creation of new job opportunities and changes in mentalities; but the focus of poverty was shifting from rural to urban areas the world over. While it would clearly be counterproductive if expenditure on urban areas merely encouraged the rural population to move to the cities, thereby exacerbating the problems, expenditure on housing, amenities, social security and welfare by many developing countries, and by international support and finance organizations, was nevertheless extremely low, resulting in a shortfall in urban shelter, infrastructure, transport systems and services. The quality of life in many cities in the industrialized countries had also deteriorated.

10. It had become apparent that Governments and local authorities alone could not manage and sustain the urban communities under their responsibility. Partnerships between public and private entities and the full involvement and participation of a well-informed population, including women, indigenous people, the elderly and the disabled, were essential to improving the social, economic and environmental quality of human settlements and the living and working environments of all people.

11. A second United Nations conference on human settlements should seek policies to halt the rapid deterioration in many people's physical living conditions and explore ways of increasing the current low levels of investment in human settlement development, providing an impetus to the activities set out in Agenda 21. The European Community and its member States supported the proposal to hold a second conference, Habitat II; but believed that adequate preparation was of crucial importance to its success. Before a final decision on the date was taken, the relative merits of 1996 and 1997 should thus be carefully examined. The General Assembly would need to establish a clear, streamlined and cost-effective structure for both the preparatory process and the conference itself, allowing for participation of all member States as well as of international organizations, local authorities and non-governmental

(Mr. Clarke, United Kingdom)

organizations. Environment and development experts, as well as experts from the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), should be included in the preparatory process. The European Community endorsed the Secretary-General's proposal that the secretariat of the Conference should be provided by Habitat.

12. The growth in the number of major international conferences brought with it a serious risk that their value and impact would be diminished by their regularity. It was of crucial importance that Habitat II should produce substantive results: the Secretary-General's proposals regarding the agenda of the conference thus merited careful attention. Full account should be taken of the work to be undertaken by the forthcoming World Summit on Social Development and the International Conference on Population and Development on poverty alleviation and population issues - issues which should not be the subject of formal negotiations at Habitat II.

13. The conference should be funded through existing United Nations budgetary resources, without negatively affecting its programmed activities, and through voluntary contributions to a trust fund established for that purpose. The cost of international conferences was clearly a matter of concern; and he noted in that regard the recent call by the Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management for a moratorium on the holding of new conferences. Nevertheless, the European Community and its Member States looked forward to participating actively in the preparation and negotiation of a draft resolution on the modalities of, and issues to be discussed at, Habitat II.

14. Mrs. AMERASEKARE (Sri Lanka) said that the significant progress made in the field of human settlements since the 1976 Conference had not been sufficient to arrest, let alone reverse, the deterioration in the living conditions of a vast segment of the world's population. The seriousness and complexity of the current human settlements situation called for urgent action to avoid a crisis. Over the coming decade, the developing countries, where enormous shortages of shelter already existed, would face the further challenge of providing shelter for an additional billion people. Furthermore, the urbanization of poverty had added new dimensions to the problem of shelter. Experience since the 1976 Conference had shown that Governments on their own could not meet the challenges of the complex and interrelated human settlement problems, and that many of the recommendations of that Conference required re-examination and updating, to take account of new perceptions of human settlement issues reflected in approaches like A New Agenda for Human Settlements and the Global Strategy for Shelter to the Year 2000.

15. A world conference with broad multidisciplinary and high-level participation could provide a forum in which to consider the planning, development and management of human settlements in the social, economic and environmental context of the next decade. Her delegation supported the convening of Habitat II at the earliest possible date, perhaps in 1996. It also supported the proposals regarding the formation of an intergovernmental

(Mrs. Amerasekare, Sri Lanka)

body contained in paragraphs 81 and 82 of the Secretary-General's report (A/47/360), as well as the process outlined in its paragraphs 87 and 91. Participation by local authorities, industrial, non-governmental and other community-based organizations must be ensured, as a means of enriching the conference proceedings. For reasons of economy, the conference secretariat should be drawn from the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements, which had valuable expertise to offer.

16. Mr. MARKS (United States of America) said that it was encouraging to see in the report of the Secretary-General (A/47/360) greater recognition of the growing role played by urban areas in environmental issues - a role with positive as well as negative potential. Prospects for improving the sustainable management of the environment and the world's natural resources were intimately linked with the management of cities. It was also very encouraging to note the explicit recognition, in paragraph 21 of the report, of the productive nature of human settlements. However, the report failed fully to identify the crucial role of local governments in effective, sound development and management of human settlements and world resources. His Government believed that that issue should be addressed at Habitat II. It also supported the proposal to devote attention partnerships between the public and private sectors in line with the lessons learned by the development community since the 1976 Conference, and also with the way in which United States foreign assistance had evolved over the years.

17. The United States supported the convening of Habitat II in 1997. However, the relative merits of 1996 and 1997 should perhaps be carefully examined before a final decision on the date was taken.

18. Turning to the question of large-scale pelagic drift-net fishing, he called upon all members of the international community to implement and abide fully by the global moratorium called for in General Assembly resolution 46/215. The United States had already taken a number of steps to implement that resolution: United States nationals were prohibited from engaging in large-scale drift-net fishing; and his country had cooperated with others with a view to ensuring that areas of large-scale pelagic drift-net fishing on the high seas were not expanded. It had also ratified the Wellington Convention. The internationally agreed global moratorium on such fishing was a clear victory for the ocean environment. All member States should demonstrate their commitment to the protection of living marine resources by fully implementing that moratorium.

19. Mr. MINAGAWA (Japan) said that, as one of the principal supporters of General Assembly resolution 46/215, Japan had undertaken effective measures to implement paragraph 3 of the resolution by reducing both the areas in which large-scale pelagic drift-net fishing was permitted and the number of licences to engage in it. Those measures were detailed in paragraph 30 of the Secretary-General's report (A/47/487). He also stressed that his Government intended to take the necessary measures to implement the moratorium described in paragraph 3 (c) of General Assembly resolution 46/215 by 31 December 1992.

(Mr. Minagawa, Japan)

20. Paragraphs 11 and 12 of the Secretary-General's report, which referred to the conservation and management measures adopted by the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT), had no relevance to large-scale drift-net fishing. They should thus be deleted.

21. Mr. AKSIN (Turkey) said that, despite the success of the 1976 United Nations Conference on Human Settlements in achieving a greater understanding and awareness of the problems, living conditions in many countries had continued to deteriorate. Alongside that deterioration, community services such as education and health were coming under increasing pressure. Demands on shelter, infrastructure and services were causing economic and social strains which could have very negative consequences on political stability. The ecological dimensions of rapid urbanization must also be borne in mind. The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development had highlighted the importance of taking environmental sustainability fully into account in the human settlement development process. But, while questions such as transport, urban water supply and waste management had been taken up at UNCED, the questions of shelter, construction technology and infrastructure had not been addressed. It was now clear that the issue of human settlements could no longer be seen in a North-South perspective, but must be treated within a comprehensive global setting. The report of the Secretary-General (A/47/360) highlighted the innovative ways in which developing countries had overcome many problems. They now had the opportunity to offer their own mix of solutions.

22. Turkey had supported the recommendation that a second United Nations conference should be held to address the broad range of human settlements issues. It favoured convening that conference in 1996, a date which, in addition to being the twentieth anniversary of the first conference, also coincided with the end of the second 4-year phase of the 12-year implementation period of the Global Strategy for Shelter to the Year 2000. As a country passing through a period of rapid urbanization, Turkey had taken a very close interest in the work of the United Nations dealing with human settlements: his Government was thus offering to host the conference in 1996. If that offer received the support of the General Assembly, a resolution should be adopted so that preparations for the conference could begin without delay.

23. Mr. FLORES (Honduras) said that rapid population growth, a variety of economic problems, natural disasters and rapid urbanization had seriously undermined the well-being of the developing countries, with serious consequences for human settlements.

24. One of the most positive results of the 1976 United Nations Conference on Human Settlements had been the adoption of the Global Strategy for Shelter to the Year 2000. The technical cooperation activities of the Centre for Human Settlements had also increased significantly during the past six years, and 14 Latin American countries received housing-related assistance from the United

(Mr. Flores, Honduras)

Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the World Bank and States members of the European Community.

25. His delegation welcomed efforts such as the Sustainable Cities Programme carried out in 15 cities in Asia, Africa, Eastern Europe and Latin America, which had focused on various aspects of housing strategies to deal with uncontrolled population growth. The training programme in human settlements financed by the World Bank and the European Economic Community encouraged Governments to devise housing strategies and analyse modalities for technical cooperation between countries, non-governmental organizations, the private sector and society as a whole.

26. Affordable housing was a national priority in his country, and a national fund to promote the construction of such swellings had received the support of international development institutions. Government programmes focused on rural as well as urban areas, and also reached isolated communities.

27. The consolidation of democracy in Central America during the 1990s had encouraged a broader approach to housing problems which strove to satisfy not only the housing requirements of individuals, but also their basic needs with respect to drinking water, electricity, health, education and infrastructure. After implementing structural adjustment programmes to deal with their serious economic problems, Central American Governments were now encouraging self-help projects in the field of rural housing. The countries of Central America had also agreed to work together to confront human settlement problems, and had established a Central American council on housing and human settlements, which would work closely with other social service institutions.

28. The view of human settlements development which had emerged from the 1976 Conference on Human Settlements had drastically changed, and it was now internationally accepted that the role of Government should be to promote private sector initiative and to foster participatory involvement by communities and non-governmental organizations. His delegation therefore welcomed the proposal to convene a second United Nations conference on human settlements for the conference would provide an appropriate forum in which to pursue such efforts further.

29. In conclusion, he expressed his Government's appreciation to the European Economic Community, the international organizations of the United Nations system and non-governmental organizations for the assistance they had provided to his country's human settlements programmes and said that his Government looked forward to further cooperation in that field.

30. Mr. GATHUNGU (Kenya) said that the report by the Secretary-General on Habitat II (A/47/360) showed that the seriousness and complexity of the current human settlements situation called for urgent and concerted action within the United Nations system to mobilize the necessary will and resources to redress the attendant problems. Agenda 21, adopted at UNCED, rightly

(Mr. Gathungu, Kenya)

stressed the importance of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) in mobilizing increased international support for local programmes.

31. As the Secretary-General's report indicated, the factors contributing to the very serious state of human settlements throughout the world, particularly in the developing countries, including high population growth rates and rapid urbanization, deteriorating physical living conditions, an inadequate environmental infrastructure and its health consequences, the household energy crisis and deteriorating urban transport services. Moreover, the shelter crisis had imposed an especially heavy burden on the more vulnerable groups of society, in particular, women, children and the disabled.

32. His country was honoured to serve as host to the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) and had spared no effort in supporting its work and that of the Commission on Human Settlements to advance research and development, the dissemination of information and technical cooperation in the field of human settlements, including the implementation of the Global Strategy for Shelter to the Year 2000. The current National Development Plan (1989-1993) recognized the need for a sustainable development approach to human settlements, encouraged the provision of shelter through the rational exploitation and management of the nation's natural resources, and outlined an effective disaster preparedness programme. The implementation of the national housing strategy depended on the availability of domestic and external resources and appropriate technology.

33. His country's approach to human settlements problems placed the human person at the centre of the development process, in the belief that people must be provided with shelter, safe drinking water, sanitary living conditions, affordable sources of energy and means of transport and other related services, not only in order to improve their welfare but, even more important, to enhance their ability to make a productive contribution to the development process. His country, which favoured the "enabling approach" to that process, would continue cooperating closely with all countries, in both public and private sector initiatives, to achieve the goals of its housing strategy.

34. While considerable progress had been made since the 1976 United Nations Conference on Human Settlements with respect to the implementation of relevant policies and programmes at the national and international levels and living conditions in urban and rural areas had improved, a new impetus was needed to stop the rapid deterioration of human settlements. His Government strongly supported the convening of a second United Nations conference on human settlements, which should, in particular, develop innovative programmes with the support of Governments and the private sector to encourage self-help efforts of the population, with a view to ensuring improved, affordable and adequate shelter for all within the context of efforts to achieve economic and social progress and eradicate poverty.

The meeting rose at 11.55 a.m.

UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-SEVENTH SESSION

Official Records

SECOND COMMITTEE
17th meeting
held on
Tuesday, 20 October 1992
at 3 p.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 17th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. PIRIZ-BALLON (Uruguay)

later: Miss DIOP (Senegal)
(Vice-Chairman)

CONTENTS

TRIBUTE TO THE MEMORY OF MR. WILLY BRANDT

EXPRESSIONS OF SYMPATHY IN CONNECTION WITH THE RECENT EARTHQUAKE IN COLOMBIA

AGENDA ITEM 80: PROTECTION OF GLOBAL CLIMATE FOR PRESENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS OF MANKIND (continued)

AGENDA ITEM 78: DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION (continued)

(e) INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION TO MITIGATE THE ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES ON KUWAIT AND OTHER COUNTRIES IN THE REGION RESULTING FROM THE SITUATION BETWEEN IRAQ AND KUWAIT

This record is subject to correction.
Corrections should be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned *within one week of the date of publication* to the Chief of the Official Records Editing Section, Room DC2-750, 2 United Nations Plaza, and incorporated in a copy of the record.

Corrections will be issued after the end of the session, in a separate corrigendum for each Committee.

92-57108 6105S (E)

Distr. GENERAL
A/C.2/47/SR.17
29 October 1992
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: SPANISH

The meeting was called to order at 3.25 p.m.

TRIBUTE TO THE MEMORY OF MR. WILLY BRANDT

1. The CHAIRMAN made a statement in memory of Mr. Willy Brandt, former Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany.

2. Mr. OHLIN (Former Secretary of the Brandt Commission) paid tribute to the memory of Mr. Willy Brandt.

3. Mr. VERGAU (Germany) expressed appreciation for the remarks made by the Chairman and by Mr. Ohlin.

EXPRESSIONS OF SYMPATHY IN CONNECTION WITH THE RECENT EARTHQUAKE IN COLOMBIA

4. The CHAIRMAN, on behalf of the Committee, expressed sympathy to the Government and people of Colombia in connection with the tragic loss of life and great material damage caused by the recent earthquake.

5. Mr. MONTOYA (Colombia) thanked the Chairman, on behalf of his delegation, for his expression of solidarity in connection with the earthquake in Colombia.

AGENDA ITEM 80: PROTECTION OF GLOBAL CLIMATE FOR PRESENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS OF MANKIND (continued)

AGENDA ITEM 78: DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION (continued) (A/47/80, A/47/82-S/23512, A/47/83, A/47/88-S/23563, A/47/225-S/23998, A/47/267, A/47/268, A/47/290-S/24204, A/47/305-E/1992/96, A/47/308-E/1992/97, A/47/344, A/47/351-S/24357, A/47/356-S/24367, A/47/361-S/24370, A/47/375, A/47/391, A/47/437)

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (A/47/360)

Report of the Secretary-General on large-scale pelagic drift-net fishing and its impact on the living marine resources of the world's oceans and seas (A/47/487)

6. Mr. KHAN (Bangladesh) said that although it was recognized that the right to shelter was one of the fundamental rights of human beings, the vast majority of people in the developing world were without any proper shelter, and the problem was aggravated by high population growth, rural/urban migration and unplanned urbanization, which were causing a deterioration of living conditions in the cities. The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development had highlighted the linkage between development activities and the global environment, and the interdependence between sustainable development, human settlements and the alleviation of poverty.

(Mr. Khan, Bangladesh)

7. Provision of shelter was an essential element of human resource development. The vast majority of people in the homeless and floating population could become valuable members of the workforce if they could be given proper housing and health and educational facilities. In that respect, his Government had made a commitment to provide sustainable habitat to its population by the year 2000. The Prime Minister, Mrs. Zia, had emphasized that habitat for sustainable development had special significance for Bangladesh because of the vulnerability of its population to natural disasters, and had reiterated the importance of a concerted international effort to bring about a reduction in population growth.

8. New strategies were needed to stop the rapid deterioration of physical living conditions. Improvements in the human settlements sector would lead to economic and social progress which would be instrumental in the alleviation of poverty. To that end, much greater political, financial and technical support must be provided to the Global Strategy for Shelter to the Year 2000, so that its goals could be achieved. The efforts of developing countries should be supplemented by the mobilization of new financial resources. At the same time, the cost-effective and affordable housing schemes using indigenous materials and techniques which had been successfully adopted in many developing countries could be replicated in other countries through South-South cooperation, with the support of the United Nations and international financial institutions.

9. Natural disasters took a heavy toll in many parts of the world, including Bangladesh. In that respect, early warning systems, emergency preparedness measures and strategies for post-disaster reconstruction and resettlement must be established. It was also necessary to develop indigenous capacity-building in the developing countries to deal with the question of sustainable habitat. Any global plan of action should pay due attention to those concerns.

10. Bangladesh supported the proposal, contained in the report of the Secretary-General (A/47/360), that an international conference on human settlements should be held in 1996. It would provide a suitable forum for finding solutions to the problems that were being faced in the planning, development and management of human settlement and an opportunity to evaluate the progress made since Habitat: United Nations Conference on Human Settlements. He also supported the Secretary-General's proposal to establish a separate preparatory committee and the idea of secretariat responsibility being entrusted to the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements. In conclusion, he stressed the need for concerted efforts by the international community to improve the inhuman conditions in which poor people lived in urban and rural areas. The United Nations and its relevant agencies could contribute more effectively through a more coordinated and integrated approach in that area.

11. Mr. BATA'ANISIA (Solomon Islands), speaking on behalf of the States members of the South Pacific Forum that were also Members of the United Nations, expressed appreciation to the Secretary-General for the report on the question of large-scale pelagic drift-net fishing (A/47/487) and reiterated the firm opposition of those countries to that practice, which had unacceptable repercussions on the marine environment and in particular on the conservation and management of living marine resources. Long drift-nets must therefore be replaced by more selective and sustainable fishing methods which lent themselves to responsible fishing practices. The international community had taken appropriate precautionary action to deal with those problems; the members of the South Pacific Forum had played a key role in that work at all levels.

12. He drew attention to the resolutions which had been adopted by the General Assembly since the question had first been brought to the attention of the international community in 1989, particularly resolution 46/215, which provided for a 50 per cent reduction of all remaining large-scale pelagic drift-net fishing, reaffirmed the need to continue to ensure that there was no further expansion of existing areas of operation of large-scale pelagic high seas drift-net fishing and established a global moratorium on all large-scale pelagic drift-net fishing by 31 December 1992. At their annual meeting held at Honiara (Solomon Islands) in July 1992, the Heads of Government of the South Pacific Forum had reiterated the call made at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development for the full implementation of resolution 46/215 in order to put an end to those fishing activities. The countries of the South Pacific Forum welcomed the assurances given by key high seas fishing interests that they would abide by the deadlines laid down in the resolution, and also the reports made to the Secretary-General in that respect.

13. Recognizing that the deadline for ending drift-net fishing on the high seas was still some weeks away, the countries of the South Pacific Forum urged all countries to continue with the programmes they had established to end that type of fishing and stressed the need to discourage the practice of reflagging and to prevent rogue fishers from ignoring the international consensus and continuing to use large drift-nets. Should any evidence of reflagging or rogue activity be uncovered, strong measures should be adopted so as to ensure that the agreed international approach was not undermined. It was therefore necessary for the parties concerned to provide the Secretary-General with full information on the nature, scale and timing of reductions in pelagic drift-net fishing activity and for the Secretary-General to report again in 1993 on the progress made in implementing resolution 46/215.

14. The countries of the South Pacific Forum were concerned at the impact of pelagic drift-net fishing in all the world's oceans, particularly in the Indian Ocean, where vessels from Taiwan were involved in unregulated fishing of albacore, which could result in the depletion of stocks, as had occurred in the South Pacific, while the by-catch of Southern Bluefin tuna could undermine conservation and management efforts undertaken for that stock. As drift-net fishing was phased out in more closely regulated areas, fleet displacement to

(Mr. Bata'Anisia, Solomon Islands)

the Indian Ocean might add to the problem already evident there. Despite the two-year-old ban on drift-net fishing in the South Pacific, the countries of the region remained concerned that the practice might reappear in the future. There was a continued need for detailed information on all fishing activities, both to demonstrate that drift-netting had ceased in accordance with the agreed timetable and to facilitate management of fisheries resources. The countries of the South Pacific Forum therefore called upon all relevant fishing interests to provide information on their activities to appropriate international or regional organizations and Governments.

15. He wished to draw attention to the recent ratification by a number of countries of the Wellington Convention for the Prohibition of Fishing with Long Drift-nets in the South Pacific. The countries of the South Pacific Forum welcomed the support for the Protocols to the Convention which were open for signature and urged all countries eligible to become parties to the Convention or its Protocols to do so as soon as possible. The United Nations could play an important and practical role in addressing environmental and development problems and he hoped that the international community, in full implementation of resolution 46/215, would vividly demonstrate the effectiveness of the Organization on an issue of relevance to many of its Members.

16. Mr. KÄÄRIÄ (Finland), speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries, said that his statement would also cover agenda item 80 (Protection of global climate for the present and future generations of mankind) which was scheduled for consideration at subsequent meetings of the Committee, since there had been a growing consensus over the previous years on how to cope with specific environmental problems from the development perspective. The imperative of concerted action to prevent and contain environmental damage and to use optimally natural resources for economic development was increasingly reflected in national and international policies.

17. After briefly recalling the progress made in designing policies, programmes and plans to promote sustainable development, in particular the adoption of Agenda 21 at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, he emphasized that the Nordic countries would continue their efforts to mobilize financial resources for global and national purposes along the lines proposed by them during the preparatory process for the Rio Conference.

18. The Nordic countries considered that the large number of countries that had signed the Framework Convention on Climate Change was a positive sign and hoped that the Convention could enter into force by the end of 1993. They favoured an extension of the mandate of the secretariat of the Conference during the interim period to provide for further sessions of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee. The period until the first session of the Conference of the Parties was of utmost importance and should be efficiently utilized. The secretariat should cooperate with the

(Mr. Kääriä, Finland)

Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change in order to obtain objective, scientific and technical information and advice. The question of financing would be crucial as the Convention entered into force. The requirements of the Convention with regard to the financial mechanism should be taken into consideration in the restructuring of the Global Environmental Facility.

19. The Nordic countries had taken numerous measures to limit concentrations of greenhouse gases and to enhance sinks and reservoirs, but the problem could only be solved through international cooperation. It was their hope that the Fourth Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Montreal Protocol, to be held at Copenhagen in November 1992, would speed up international action to stop the depletion of the ozone layer.

20. In the view of the Nordic countries, the Framework Convention on the Conservation of Biological Diversity struck a good balance between conservation concerns and the need for sustainable management and fair sharing of benefits arising from the utilization of biological resources. In that connection, the meeting the following year of the intergovernmental committee responsible for the implementation of the Convention would be an important one. Norway was organizing an expert meeting during the first half of 1993 to prepare for further cooperation in the implementation of the Convention.

21. One of the important results of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development was the request for the initiation of an intergovernmental negotiating process to elaborate an international convention to combat desertification. In addressing that matter, it was vital to keep in sight the links between the environment, the economy and society. The agreed text of Agenda 21 on drought and desertification formed a good basis for further action. Consideration should be given to the establishment of a scientific panel to support and assist the negotiating committee on an international convention to combat desertification in its substantive work, and lessons should be learnt from the experience of the United Nations Conference on Desertification, held at Nairobi in 1977, whose recommendations had not been implemented to any substantial degree. While the convention should be global in nature and should create a common framework of action, a clear focus should be placed on the problems of Africa, since the widespread famine experienced in that continent was partly due to desertification. Attention should be drawn to the links between the Framework Convention on Climate Change, the proposed convention to combat desertification, and the principles agreed to in Rio in connection with further international cooperation on forestry issues.

22. With regard to environmental problems in Eastern and Central Europe, the Nordic countries were of the view that, while the main responsibility lay with the countries themselves, international cooperation was also required since, to a large extent, the environmental problems were of a transboundary nature. The Nordic countries were addressing in particular those environmental issues related to nuclear safety and waste, and called for international cooperation in that field.

(Mr. Kääriä, Finland)

23. With regard to the general principle of sustainable utilization of the living resources of the sea, the Nordic countries believed that Agenda 21 set guidelines for future efforts to protect those resources and the marine environment from the dangers posed by human activities. In that connection, they considered that the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic reflected, at the regional level, the concerns which had guided the elaboration of Agenda 21.

24. Given the unviability of current patterns of energy use, the Nordic countries wished to underline the need for intensified international efforts to promote the utilization of new and renewable sources of energy.

25. Agenda 21 had outlined a human settlements programme which emphasized practical ideas such as the enabling strategy, public and private sector partnership, use of indigenous materials and technology, self-reliance and capacity building, including full participation of women. The Nordic countries were looking forward to the active implementation of those recommendations by both national Governments and the international community, and particularly by the Commission on Human Settlements at its fourteenth session. A second conference on human settlements (Habitat II), planned for 1997, could be important in providing a link with follow-up activities to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development and an opportunity to monitor and evaluate the progress made in implementation of the Global Strategy for Shelter to the Year 2000. As to the substance, the Nordic countries emphasized that an in-depth analysis of global trends in human settlement should be conducted, a task in which the performance indicators being produced jointly by the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) and the World Bank could be instrumental in providing the necessary information base.

26. Miss DIOP (Senegal), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

27. Mr. BAILLARGEON (Canada) said that Canada had recently made a submission outlining its position with respect to large-scale pelagic drift-net fishing, which was annexed to the report of the Secretary-General. Canada's primary objective was to ensure the implementation of General Assembly resolution 46/215, which it had co-sponsored. It welcomed the extension of drift-net regulatory and information-gathering programmes in the North Pacific by Japan, the Republic of Korea and Taiwan. Canada again called on all States to comply fully with the terms of resolution 46/215, and in particular the global moratorium on all large-scale pelagic drift-net fishing. In that regard, he hoped that the European Community would reconsider its decision not to implement the moratorium in the Baltic Sea and to delay its implementation in some cases in the Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea until January 1994. Canada also called on all members of the international community to remain vigilant, so as to ensure that the moratorium was not circumvented by the reflagging of drift-net vessels or by activities of "pirate" vessels. It requested that the Secretary-General should continue to

(Mr. Baillargeon, Canada)

monitor compliance with resolution 46/215 subsequent to the moratorium date and prepare a further report on the subject for consideration at the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly.

28. In his capacity as a Member of Parliament from Vancouver and the international chairman of Global Parliamentarians on Habitat, he recalled that Canada had hosted the first major conference devoted specifically to human settlements. The United Nations Conference on Human Settlements, held at Vancouver, had certainly helped to promote global acknowledgement of the importance of that issue. Furthermore, Canada had provided financial support to the North American and Caribbean Information Office of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) since 1980. The Canadian International Development Agency and the International Development Research Centre had provided assistance for numerous projects related to human settlements. The Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation had pioneered many programmes in which it had emphasized energy efficiency in housing construction.

29. The world had changed considerably since the 1976 Conference, and the need to supplement government housing initiatives with greater participation by the private sector, non-governmental organizations and the general population itself had become clear. Canada was attempting to promote such participation both domestically and through projects executed in developing countries.

30. Human settlements had emerged as one of the major issues at the recent United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. Canada fully agreed with the proposal to hold another conference on human settlements, preferably in 1996, to coincide with the twentieth anniversary of the Vancouver Conference. It supported the establishment of an intergovernmental preparatory committee to organize the conference with the participation of all those concerned.

31. Mr. SINGH (India) said that the debate in the Second Committee on human settlements was important for two reasons: first, because the General Assembly must take decisions at its forty-seventh session regarding the objectives, content and scope of the proposed conference on human settlements (Habitat II); and second, because of the importance of promoting sustainable human settlement development as highlighted in chapter VII of Agenda 21 adopted at the Rio Conference.

32. Despite the achievements since the Vancouver Conference, plans to improve human settlements had met with serious difficulties, resulting for the most part from population growth and urbanization. The lack of infrastructure and safe drinking water, sewerage and sanitation affected more than half the total population in developing countries. As the Secretary-General had pointed out in his report, conventional econometric models had failed to measure correctly the economic returns on human settlement investments. His delegation shared the view that investment guidelines should reflect socio-economic realities.

(Mr. Singh, India)

33. India attached the utmost priority to the objective of providing shelter for all, and to that end, had made concerted efforts to encourage partnership between the public and the private sectors, to introduce innovative technology and building materials, to employ innovative financing methods and to use energy-saving devices. In 1991, Habitat had awarded its Scroll of Honour to the Housing and Urban Development Corporation of India. In 1992, it had awarded that honour to a reputed Indian architect.

34. Much remained to be done in the field of human settlements, as noted in chapter VII of Agenda 21. That programme advocated an "enabling approach" through which external assistance would help to generate the internal resources needed to improve the living environment of all people by the year 2000. It should be emphasized, however, that attaining the goal of providing adequate shelter for all required a much higher level of financing than was currently available.

35. Resolution 46/164 had deferred to the forty-seventh session the decision on the date, modalities, financing and other organizational aspects of Habitat II. The Chairman of the Group of 77 had stated the position of the Group, which would shortly adopt a resolution on the convening of that conference. It was important to hold the Habitat II conference in 1996, since a substantive review of the Rio Conference agreements was anticipated for 1997. Furthermore, the preparatory process should utilize fully the existing Habitat secretariat, whose performance had been admirable.

36. Mr. McDONALD (European Economic Community) said that the report of the Secretary-General indicated a high level of compliance with the resolutions concerning large-scale pelagic drift-net fishing, at least as far as the Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea were concerned, and noted that General Assembly resolutions 44/225 and 45/197 were implemented by Economic Community regulation 354/92, which expressly prohibited fishing by European Community vessels with drift-nets longer than 2.5 kilometres in European Community waters as well as on the high seas, with limited exceptions. He expressed surprise at the submission of Canada mentioned in paragraph 48 of document A/47/487, which had again been singled out by the representative of Canada in his statement at the current meeting. In his opinion, there were six paragraphs on the North Pacific in the Secretary-General's report that directly concerned the Canadian delegation and had not been referred to. Also surprising were the statements that the European Community would not implement the moratorium in the Baltic Sea and would delay its implementation in the Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea until January 1994. As there were no high seas within the Baltic Sea, it was outside the scope of the resolution, as the International Baltic Sea Fishery Commission had noted and as had been reiterated in paragraph 9 of the report. Nevertheless, the European Commission had proposed the implementation of the moratorium to the Baltic Commission because, in accordance with the legislation of the European Economic Community, that moratorium applied not only to the high seas but also to internal Community waters. The International Baltic Sea Fishery Commission

(Mr. McDonald)

had not responded to that request and would reconsider the matter at its meeting in September 1993. There had been no delay in implementation of the moratorium in the Mediterranean Sea either: the moratorium had come into effect with the adoption of Community Regulation No. 345 of the previous year. There was also a reference to the use of large-scale pelagic drift-net fishing in paragraph 58 of the report. Since his delegation had just received that report, it would investigate the matter thoroughly and if it was discovered that there had been any contravention the relevant procedures would be applied.

37. Mr. Piriz-Ballon (Uruguay) resumed the Chair.

38. Mr. CHEEMA (United Nations Development Programme) said that the process of urbanization had both positive and negative aspects, particularly in developing countries. On the one hand, it was obvious that the rapid expansion of large cities was essential for developing countries to achieve sustained growth coupled with social development, since 60 per cent of the gross national product (GNP) was generated in urban areas. On the other hand, it was also true that soaring population growth had led to an alarming increase in the number of households living in poverty. Indeed, inadequate infrastructure forced much of the urban population to live in slums and squatter settlements, while the problems deriving from environmental contamination, depletion of natural resources and widening regional differences continued to multiply. That dichotomous reality posed a great challenge that the second United Nations conference on human settlements (Habitat II) could address. That conference must serve as a forum for the formulation of a global plan of action that included commitments by participating Governments, a set of rolling programmes, indications of financial requirements and the strengthening of national and municipal institutions.

39. In accordance with the Human Development Report 1991 and its conviction that economic viability and productivity must be accompanied by social justice, ecological sustainability and popular participation, UNDP had targeted five basic urban development objectives for the decade that had begun in 1990: the alleviation of poverty, the provision of adequate infrastructure, the improvement of the environment, the strengthening of local authorities and institutions and the expansion of the role of the private sector and non-governmental organizations.

40. During the Fifth Programming Cycle (1992-1996), UNDP would increase its technical assistance in partnership with the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), the United Nations Children's Fund, the World Bank and other international organizations; it would build or strengthen local capacity to address problems and would use a programme approach and experiment with new approaches to improve the efficiency of its technical assistance.

(Mr. Cheema)

41. The latest UNDP urban development programmes and initiatives had emphasized the five aforementioned priority areas. The most important were: the Urban Management Programme and the Local Initiative Facility for Urban Environment. The former focused on working with developing countries to address problems of municipal finance and administration, infrastructure, land management, urban environment and poverty reduction. The latter focused on local initiatives, promoting dialogue between various departments and encouraging municipal authorities, non-governmental organizations and community-based organizations to collaborate with each other.

42. Since over 60 per cent of UNDP-funded human settlements projects were executed by the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), a Task Force had been established in 1989; it reviewed the coordination arrangements of ongoing programmes and determined priority areas of future concern to the two organizations. Lastly, UNDP was prepared to collaborate with the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) in undertaking preparatory work for the second United Nations conference on human settlements (Habitat II).

43. Mr. YUH (Republic of Korea), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said, with respect to compliance with General Assembly resolution 46/215, that Canada had clearly indicated satisfaction with the extension from 1 July to 31 December 1992 of the regulatory and information-gathering programmes implemented by his Government for Korean-flagged fishing vessels that practised large-scale pelagic drift-net fishing in the North Pacific. At the end of June 1992, the Republic of Korea had already managed to reduce large-scale pelagic drift-net fishing by more than 50 per cent and currently intended to allocate more than $50 million to ships that practised that type of fishing in order to persuade them to abandon such activities altogether. Therefore, from 1 January 1993 onward, and in conformity with paragraph 3 (c) of resolution 46/215, all those who contravened the regulations in force would be liable to the penalties provided for therein. The details of the new legal provisions would be communicated to the Secretary-General as soon as possible.

(e) INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION TO MITIGATE THE ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES ON KUWAIT AND OTHER COUNTRIES IN THE REGION RESULTING FROM THE SITUATION BETWEEN IRAQ AND KUWAIT

Draft resolution A/C.2/47/L.7

44. Mr. AL-SABAH (Kuwait) introduced draft resolution A/C.2/47/L.7 entitled "International cooperation to mitigate the environmental consequences on Kuwait and other countries in the region resulting from the situation between Iraq and Kuwait", which focused on economic and technical issues rather than political ones, and expressed the hope that the draft resolution would be adopted by consensus.

The meeting rose at 5.15 p.m.